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ABSTRACT

Fourth in a series of volumes containing the proceedings of the 1983 Australian Family Research Conference, this publication deals with policies and families in Australia. Papers and authors included are: "Improving Social Security Programs: Some Options and Barriers" (Andrew Burbidge), "Single Parent Families and Social Policies: Australia and Sweden: A Comparative Study" (Bettina Cass and Mary Ann O'Loughlin), "Child Care from a Consumer Perspective: The Experience of 156 Sydney Families" (Tania Sweeney, Frances Staden, and Adam Jamrozik), "Implications of Language Use and Language Policy for Members of Non-English Speaking Families in Australia" (M. Rado, L. Foster, and R. Lewis), "Negotiating an Ethnic Identity: The Survivor's Viewpoint" (Jim Harvey), "Families, Schooling and Work in the Latrobe Valley" (Terry Evans and Daryl Nation), "Parents' Choice of School in the ACT" (Caroline Coombs, Janet Hunt, and Dennis Strand), "Policies for Families?" (Frank Maas), "Family Policy (Beyond the Definitional Dilemma--An Integrated Approach)" (Patrick O'Flaherty), "Dependency--A Challenge for Family Policy" (Peggy G. Koopman-Boyden), "The Impact of Housing Costs on Families" (Andrew Burbidge), and "Living and Learning: Rapid Community Growth and Its Consequences in Newcastle, NSW" (Aub Everett and Ross Telfer). (RM)

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AUSTRALIAN FAMILY RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Held at Burgmann College, Australian National University, Canberra, 23-25 November 1983

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VOLUME IV

Policies and Families

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- Volume III: Marital adjustment and breakdown
- Volume IV: Policies and families
- Volume V: Support Networks
- Volume VI: Family life
- Volume VII: Closing address and index

CONTENTS

VOLUME IV

Improving social security programs: Some options and barriers	Andrew Burbidge	1
Single parent families and social policies: Australia and Sweden: A comparative study	Bettina Cass & Mary Ann O'Loughlin	52
Child care from a consumer perspective: The experience of 156 Sydney families	Tania Sweeney, Frances Staden & Adam Jamrozik	142
Implications of language use and language policy for members of non-English speaking families in Australia	M. Rado & L. Foster, with the assistance of R. Lewis	177
Negotiating an ethnic identity: The survivor's viewpoint	Jim Harvey	210
Families, schooling and work in the Latrobe Valley	Terry Evans & Daryl Nation	227
Parents' choice of school in the ACT	Caroline Coombs, Janet Hunt & Dennis Strand	264
Policies for families?	Frank Maas	281
Family policy (Beyond the definitional dilemma — An integrated approach)	Patrick O'Flaherty	322
Dependency — A challenge for family policy	Peggy G. Koopman-Boyden	352
The impact of housing costs on families	Andrew Burbidge for the Centre for Urban Research and Action	370
Living and learning: Rapid community growth and its consequences in Newcastle, NSW	Aub Everett & Ross Telfer	375

Improving social security programs: some options and barriers

Andrew Burbidge
Institute of Family Studies

INTRODUCTION

Recently released evidence indicates that income inequality in Australia is increasing. While inequality is in the economic and political interests of some, it means stress, hardship and poverty for other individuals and families.

Gaining an understanding of the relationships between the level of economic resources and processes of family formation, functioning and stability, is hampered, however, by inadequate information about the distribution of assets and the links between assets and income.

Development of policies which alter the distribution of economic resources is also severely constrained by the absence of statistical data on the levels and pattern of asset holding. Improvements in the equity and efficiency of both the tax and social security systems, for example, appear almost to have been halted by problems associated with an inadequate tax base and shortage of government revenue.

The paper calls for the provision of resources to establish and collect data for an inquiry into the distribution of assets and income in Australia and a reassessment of the options for changes to income security and taxation provisions.

1. INCOME INEQUALITY

Income is but one measure of the relative well-being of different individuals and families. However, given the difficulties of measuring status and power, and shortages of data on many other indicators of family finances (the value of fringe benefits, ownership of wealth, etc) it is a measure commonly used by policy analysts from most disciplines. Income appears to be an important factor in individual and family well-being (a necessary but not sufficient precondition?) and, as absolute and relative income levels can be altered by government policies, debate on new or changed policies is frequently intense.

This section looks at recent evidence that income inequality is increasing.

Between September and November 1982 the Australian Bureau of Statistics interviewed people in over 15,000 dwellings about their income in 1981-82 and their income at the time of the survey. This was the fourth special income survey conducted by ABS since 1968-69.

The latest survey suggests that the top 10% of income recipients received 29.0% of all income in the year 1981-82 and that the proportion received by the top 10% had increased from the level of 27.8% of income in 1978-79. In contrast, the proportion of income going to the bottom 20% of income recipients was 1.9%, a fall

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from the 2.7% in 1978-79.

TABLE 1 in here

While these changes may seem small, the fall of 0.8% of total income received by the bottom 20% of income recipients represented a reduction in their share of income of $746.4 million.

Evidence that income inequality has increased differs from the conclusions of Gruen and Gallagher (July 1983, p.8)

> "There is little doubt that the 'seventies have witnessed a substantial decline in inequality among individual income recipients".

While it is the latest figures (not then available to Gruen and Gallagher) which most clearly show a tendency for increasing inequality, disaggregation of the data (table 1) shows that figures for persons mask sharp differences between males and females. Increasing levels of inequality among males appear to have started before 1978-79, but to have been offset by the decline in inequality of female incomes. The reduction in income inequality among women which occurred between 1973-74 and 1978-79 was probably associated with the implementation of the equal pay decision and increased opportunities for women to obtain part-time employment. By 1981-82, however, the underlying deterioration in the labour market appears to be polarizing the incomes of both men and women.

The figures in Table 1, more over, probably understate the increase in inequality in this period. The Bureau has progressivly refined its published data on incomes so as to exclude persons whose change of status during the year may make their income for that year a poor indicator of their current annual income.

The 1981-82 figures thus exclude a number of people whose incomes are likely to be low; thereby understating the number of low income recipients compared with the definitions used in earlier years.

Groups excluded from the 1981-82 survey, some of whom were included in earlier surveys, include:

a) females whose status changed during the year. In 1978-79, in contrast, female one parent income recipients were included if they had lived as one parent families for 40 weeks or more in the year. Women (but not men) who married during the year were all excluded from the 1981-82 survey but were all included in 1978-79.

b) all persons who attended school full-time for any part of the year.

c) all persons who migrated to Australia during the year.

Although other factors contribute, the exclusion of some individuals whose circumstances changed during the year has seen the number of income recipients covered by the survey drop from 91.6% of the population 15 and over in 1968-69 to 85.9% in 1981-82.

The exclusions may be part of the explanation for the indications of a reduction in inequality between 1973-74 and 1978-79. The increase in levels of inequality which occurred between 1978-79 and 1981-82, despite additional exclusions of low income groups, should therefore be a major cause of concern.

The importance of unemployment as a cause of increased income inequality is suggested by the dramatic decline in the proportion of people with wages and salaries as their principal source of income and the substantial increase in the proportion whose principal source was Government cash benefits.

Between 1973-74 and 1981-82 persons whose principal source of income was wages and salaries fell from 60.9 per cent to 45.1 per cent of income recipients, while government cash benefits as the principal source rose from 24.8 per cent in 1973-74 to 31.7 per cent in the latest survey. The proportion of men principally dependent on government cash payments doubled in this period.

TABLE 2 in here

Some insight into the problems of erosion of the tax base can be drawn from the decline in wage and salary earners relative to the numbers whose principal source of income came from their own business, farm or profession. This latter group increased from 820,000 in 1973-74 to 1,212,300 in 1981-82, a rise of 48%

If wage and salary earners are the most 'reliable' taxpayers and the self-employed have the highest incidence of tax avoidance and evasion, the major changes in the relative size of these two groups shown in table 2 suggest substantial problems of loss of revenue. As the proportion of income taxes coming from PAYE taxpayers increased from 77.2% in 1973-74 to 82.6% in 1981-82 it is not surprising that ordinary taxpayers have little faith in the fairness of the tax system.

While the average income of all income recipients increased from $7,450 in 1978-79 to $9,656 in 1981-82, income tax, net of dependent spouse rebate, would have taken $446 in 1978-79 (almost zero net of $442 p.a. family allowances for 2 children), but $776 (or $334 net of family allowances) in 1981-82. If a single income couple with two children received this average level of income, their disposable income would have increased by 26.8% while the Consumer Price Index rose by 33.7%. Adjusted for price changes, therefore, disposable income in 1981-82 was $483 or $9.29 p.w. less than in 1978-79. This data provides a sharp contrast to the National Accounts figures which show seasonally adjusted household disposable income per capita increasing by 37.0% between the December quarters of 1978 and 1981, an increase in excess of the movement in the CPI. It provides a further reason to examine the labour market and income transfer programs which could be used to ensure adequate income levels for all.

2. SOME POLICY OPTIONS TO RAISE INCOME LEVELS AND REDUCE INEQUALITY

This section outlines some of the issues and difficulties associated with four popular proposals for making incomes more equal; namely:

a) Labour market policies

b) Adjusting existing pension and benefit programs

c) Introducing a universal guaranteed income scheme.

d) Introducing a negative income tax scheme.

The perspective adopted is, if anything, that of the politcal economist rather than the economist, because I think that too much of the debate has ignored the probabiity that some policy aspects would require major shifts in social attitudes.

A. Labour Market Policies

Considerable debate surrounds any government's economic management policies and it is not proposed to enter into the current controversy in this paper. (Those interested could compare and contrast the policies put forward by the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments at the Economic Summit).

The strategy of ensuring that there are 'jobs for all who want to work' has many advantages over income transfers, both for the individual (higher level of income, self-respect, role within family and society) and for society (reduced social costs, more direct and indirect tax revenue and fewer demands on income support programs).

The order of magnitude of the task, however, should give cause for scepticism about any quick path to full-employment - either through higher rates of economic growth or through job creation programmes. As indicated below a very large number of additional jobs would be needed to provide full-year employment for all people of non-pension age, or even to raise employment levels of women to equal those of men in 1974 or 1981. Lifting incomes through improved labour market opportunities should not be seen, especially in the short term, as an adequate substitute for an overhaul of pensions and taxation provisions.

Because many would-be workers drop out of the labour force when it becomes hard to find employment (Sheehan and Stricker, 1981), unemployment levels are a poor indicator of the number of jobs that are needed for all those who want to work. Some of those working part-time or for part-of the year also want to work more hours or for more weeks of the year, and are likely to take up some of the jobs resulting from expansionary economic policies. To try to take account of hidden unemployment and underemployment, a measure of labour utilisation was constructed.

TABLE 3 in here

Table 3 shows for example, that after allowing for people who worked part-time or for part of the year, the number of (full-time equivalent) weeks worked by males in 1974 represented 86.2 per cent of the number of weeks that would have been worked if all males aged 15-65 had been employed throughout the year.

Between 1974 and 1981 labour utilisation rates fell for males and not married females, but rose for married women. Changes in school retention rates and voluntary retirements complicate interpretation a little, but the main changes in the labour utilisation rate between 1974 and 1981 are likely to have been the result of the deterioration in the labour market (particularly for full-time job seekers), against a background of a long term trend towards increased part-time employment.

The purpose of the table is not so much to summarize labour market changes as to indicate the orders of magnitude of the employment needed if low income people, particularly women, are to have incomes equal to those in steady full-time employment.

If we assume that approximately half the drop in male labour utilisation rates since 1974 is due to increased unemployment we might adopt 84% as a target labour utilisation rate for males and not married women and a target of 60% for married women. The additional (full-year equivalent) jobs needed to have achieved these targets in 1981 were 138,500 extra for males, 461,090 for not-married females, and 644,800 for married females. If the hope is that all individuals eventually will be financially independent of both the State and their spouse through paid employment, it will clearly take some time.

Other factors can be stated more briefly.

a) Even among full-year, full-time workers there is considerable inequality of earnings; sufficient to leave some families in poverty. For example, the mean earnings of female full-year, full-time workers (on an age specific basis) was 25% less than that of males in 1981-82. To further reduce inequalities, labour market strategies would need to compress wage relativities and to release women from the lower paid occupations in which they are concentrated. Such changes have significant implications for the membership and control of trade unions.

b) Substantial additional training, child care and transport infrastructure are needed to assist people to work their way out of poverty.

c) More than 60% of people on pensions and benefits are aged and invalids. For many of these people improved income support provisions will be preferred to programs which seek to enable them to compete more effectively in the labour market.

Reducing Inequality through Income Transfers

Income transfer alternatives can be grouped by reference to differences in approach to the issues of eligibility and methods for determining rates of payment. With two important approaches to eligibility and three principal payment concepts there are in theory 6 distinct income transfer alternatives (and many possible combinations).

In Table 4 many Australian existing and proposed transfer programs are grouped according to whether payments are earnings-related, income-tested, or flat-rate without income test. Income transfer systems can also be loosely grouped by the number of eligibility criteria. Present Australian income support programs have been classed as having many separate categories because eligibility depends not only on income and family size but also such criteria as age, single parent status, degree of invalidity, willingness to work etc.

TABLE 4 in here

Applied economic and social research in Australia has mainly been on schemes in groups 1, 2, 3 and 6. Professor Downing's work on income support policies for the aged set out many of the important issues in the choice between earnings related and means-tested payments but considers these alternatives only for a particular category of people. More recent applied research on the earnings related approach has been undertaken by Professor Hancock and Mr. Justice Woodhouse with reference to the aged, the disabled, and the relatives of those killed in accidents.

In 1975 the Structural Adjustment Assistance Scheme implemented the earnings-related approach for persons displaced from employment in certain industries by the reductions in tariffs in that year. The earnings related system has been widely adopted overseas to provide income support for the employed. However earnings related schemes (categories 1 and 4 in table 4) are not discussed here.

Proposals for the reform of existing provisions through the creation of new categories of persons entitled to means-tested income support payments have been put forward by many analysts (eg VCOSS, the partially disabled; Ironmonger, young people still at school).

A third major area of research on income support policies has explored the possibility of greatly reducing the number of separate categories for income support, and has advocated social dividend payments as the mechanism for redistribution. This approach was put forward by Professor Henderson in Poverty in Australia and has been further explored by Edwards, Saunders, and Manning. Payments without an income test are already part of the Australian income transfer system, principally through Family Allowances, Blind and Double Orphan and TPI pensions, and Handicapped Persons Allowances.

The negative income tax approach can achieve the same redistributive impact as social dividend schemes but would make transfer payments only to those with incomes below specified levels. In Australia, this approach was proposed by a Priorities Review Staff report in 1975, and appears to have gained the principal architect of the Poverty Inquiry's proposal as a recent convert. (Manning, 1981b).

As some commentators have used the term negative income tax as a generic term for all types of guaranteed income proposals, it is perhaps worth setting down the meaning attached in this paper to the terms negative income tax and social dividend schemes. In this I am following Manning (1981a) rather than Richardson (1979).

> "A negative income tax is a scheme by which government authorities undertake to make payments to poor individuals or families without regard to circumstances other than family size and income from other sources. For any size of family the maximum payment is made where the family has no other income, and as the family's private income increases the payment is tapered away. Ideally, the payments would be integrated with the income tax. ...
>
> A social dividend scheme differs from a negative income tax in that all citizens receive the minimum income payment according to family size, not just the poor. This universal payment is balanced by heavier taxes." Manning 1981a, 184.

Thus, lightly armed, we proceed to look at some of the issues involved in reforming existing social service and tax provisions, or the introduction of guaranteed income schemes.

B. Reforming Existing Income Transfer Programs

Proposals to increase net rates of payment under existing social security provisions are generally justified on the basis of income being inadequate to meet needs, on the basis that rates of payment have declined since some point in time, or on grounds of natural justice (horizontal equity for example).

A recent article by Gruen and Gallagher uses overseas levels to assess the adequacy of Australian pension and benefit rates:

> "Our overall verdict on the charge of the left - that Australian social welfare provisions are very mean - must be one of qualified support. Those international comparisons which are available regarding relative levels of income support for the 'average' earner suggest that the Australian safety net is fixed considerably lower than the safety net in other countries".

Gruen and Gallagher (1983, 9, 14) cite an OECD study of the proportion of GDP devoted to transfer payments and, while low rates of payment are not the only factor responsible, they note that only 2 out of 20 OECD countries had lower proportions than Australia.

The Victorian Government Income Security Task Force (1982) based most of its recommendations for increased payments on its finding that 'lone parent families, the unemployed and people renting in the private market' appear to be experiencing special hardship. The report quotes from a submission from St. Luke's Family Care, Bendigo on the stresses which low income (absolute, relative?) puts on family life:

> "We have found that poverty and living on a low income are significant factors leading to family breakdown which requires a child or teenager to be cared for away from their natural family. The stresses of insufficient income place tremendous strain upon the family unit. Families cope with these pressures in different ways: some go without food, some do not clothe their children adequately, some fall behind in their rent, and some rely on emergency relief. All of these families find that living on pensions and benefits affect their dignity and self esteem. None of the low income families with whom we work find it easy, or say that they have enough money on which to live. More importantly, we find that the pressure of living on a low income exacerbates other problems within the family unit, to such a stage that it adversely affects the family's parenting and coping abilities ... It is our opinion that, if pensions and benefits were raised at least to the level of the poverty line, then the incidence of family breakdown would be reduced, and the success of home release of children to their natural family would be increased. We believe that, for many, an adequate level of income security is a pre-condition for family survival." (8)

The report of the Social Welfare Policy Secretariat (1981, 214-5) also identified one parent families, and unemployed people as having low income in relation to their needs. Although couples with children were more likely to be in need than those without children the report's 'most important result is that it is mainly those income units or households where the head does not work which have low incomes in relation to their needs'.

On this evidence, the groups of individuals and families with the most urgent needs can be assisted through increases in the rates of means tested pensions and benefits.

While increases in rates of means tested pensions, benefits and allowances do not require the levels of increased outlays needed for comprehensive social dividend or negative income tax schemes, real incraases in most payment levels have been blocked by lack of revenue. The first budget of the new government, for example, only increased base rates of pension to cover price increases, and made no start towards the government's goal of lifting pensions to 25 per cent of average weekly earnings. One reason for an inquiry into wealth, therefore, is to assess the contribution which net worth, capital gains and probate taxes could make to government revenue and improvements in existing income support provisions.

More importantly, however, data on asset ownership is needed to assist in the assessment of options to restore progressivity to the transfer system as a whole. Mathews maintains, for example, that it is a myth that the income tax system is effectively as well as nominally progressive.

> "... personal tax has become largely a tax on wage and salary earners as other income groups at both the upper and lower ends of the income scale, have been able to take steps to avoid or evade tax ... Despite the emphasis which has been given to vertical equity in the design of the Australian tax system, the essential problem is not to make the rich pay higher rates of tax, or even more tax, than the poor: it is to make the rich pay any tax at all." (Mathews, 1980, 28, 30-31)

Without a major overhaul of the tax system, reforms to existing social service provisions are likely to be hampered by lack of revenue and effectively undermined in their redistributive impact.

The heavy emphasis of the existing system on categories is another subject of criticism. The multiplicity of eligibility conditions for the large number of pensions, benefits and allowances make income transfer provisions complex and confusing, make it difficult for applicants to know entitlements and results in reduced effectiveness (take-up) of income support provisions. A Department of Social Security report gives an indication of the bewildering variety of pensions, benefits and allowances that may be available, although it understates the full range by failing to name the various education, training and veterans allowances that are available to eligible persons.

- "Single persons aged 16 or 17, without children - unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, special benefit, invalid pension, sheltered employment allowance, TEAS (Tertiary Education Assistance Scheme) and other education allowances and employment training scheme allowances;

- Single persons aged 18 and over but less than age pension age, without children - as above with the addition of class B widow's pension and pensions paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs;

- Married couples not of age pension age - unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, special benefit, invalid pension, sheltered employment allowance, TEAS, employment training scheme allowance, wife's pension, and pensions paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Family Income Supplement.

- Sole parents - unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, special benefit, supporting parent's benefit, class A widow's pension, invalid pension, sheltered employment allowance, and pensions paid by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Family Income Supplement.

- Aged persons (females aged 60 and over and males aged 65 and over) - age pension, pensions paid by Department of Veterans' Affairs, widow's pension, and invalid pension. (The wives of age pensioners who are not of age pension age themselves - can be included in the married couple category while their husbands are included in the aged persons category)." McVicar, forthcoming

Many of the conditions which determine eligibility for income support payment - particularly unemployment benefits and special benefits - are highly subjective, arbitrary and discretionary. Decisions requiring the exercise of discretion include:

- the reasonableness of the reasons for leaving previous employment.
- the adequacy of work endeavour (the applicant's own efforts to find employment).
- the reasonableness of grounds put forward by the applicant for refusing work judged suitable by the CES.
- the genuineness of assertions that the applicant has left school and is in financial need. The test is applied to school leavers seeking special benefits during the six weeks wait imposed on school leavers and the voluntarily unemployed.
- whether the applicant's appearance and manner is suitable to potential employers.

- whether an applicant for special benefits is in financial need due to unforseeable circumstances or as a result of his/her own actions eg. leaving a job, leaving a husband.

A Brotherhood of St. Laurence study of 70 people terminated from unemployment benefits concluded:

> "The present study shows that the flurry to test the work motivation of the unemployed (regardless of the dearth of jobs) has involved arbitrary, unjust decisions, has operated punitively and has caused considerable economic stress ... the vagueness and complexity of the 'work test' guidelines were found to lead to multiple terminations, conflicting advice, delays, lost files, poor recording and inconsistent procedures, such that departmental officers often conceded their inability to cope with the situation." (Brewer, 1978, 83-4)

Alan Jordan points out, however, that most critics of the work test are in fact objecting to aspects of its implementation, rather than questioning the idea that society should seek to distinguish between those who don't want to work and those who do (or are unable to work).

> "Although abolition of the work test is sometimes proposed in public discussion it is probable that most of the critics have not distinguished principle clearly from practice, and are objecting to particular administrative practices rather than to the underlying principles. Certainly, such issues as treatment of people deemed to have left jobs voluntarily, requirements to seek work independently, fairness of selection of individuals for active work testing and rights of refusal of job offers should be examined critically, but abolition of work testing would be a more complex matter than repeal of a few subsections of the Social Services Act: it would involve reconstruction of the whole statute; in fact, its replacement according to a different conceptual framework." (Jordan, 198[illegible] 35)

Much can be (and has been) done within the existing framework to standardise pension rates, eligibility for fringe benefits and income or means tests. However, it is difficult to simplify eligibility conditions while the approach is one of specifying a large number of particular circumstances that entitle applicants to income support, rather than adopting a principal - such as lack of income or barriers to obtaining employment - as a broad framework for determining which groups are entitled to income support. Public debate about the goals of income support programs and the philosophy that should guide policies may not lead to administratively simple policies but could rationalize and improve co-ordination of diverse programs and public understanding of obligations and entitlements.

A different type of criticism is that pensions and taxation provisions penalize married or de facto couples (relative to two individuals), and favour one parent families. Determining whether someone is a sole parent or part of a de facto couple, means enquiries that are seen as intrusive and offensive. For pensions and benefits purposes, a married or de facto couple is treated differently to two individuals in that a spouse's income is taken into account for the assessment of the appropriate rate of payment. In addition, the maximum rate of pension for a couple may be greater, equal or less than double the rate for an individual, as may the 'free income' area. However, it is the combining of income which is the most important feature of the category married. This provision means that many unemployed people are ineligible for Unemployment Benefit because their spouse's income is above the income test limit. The recognition of the category single parent enables provision of a Guardian's Allowance and a Sole Parent tax rebate but is another departure from the individual as the basis for tax and pensions, and involves questions to applicants (and their neighbours) which have been criticised as offensive. The inclusion of a marital status category in the tax system has been condemned in that, among other things, the Dependent Spouse Rebate effectively means that there is a lower tax threshold for a spouse who is a second earner, and thus work disincentives for married women (mostly).

As Meredith Edwards (1983) has pointed out, under the existing system, the abolition of marital status for tax and pension purposes would result in a major shift in resources to married women at home at the expense of other groups, particularly one parent families. While there may be a need to retain marital status under any income transfer system (in order to provide extra help to one parent families and to treat a married person less generously than a single individual), the abolition of marital status provisions, without regard to the pattern of asset-holding, could have very undesirable redistributive consequences.

> "The seemingly intractable problem is that if reform of the social security structure included the provision of assistance to people irrespective of their personal relationships then that reform would mean that assistance presently provided to people because of their marital history (eg. sole parents and wives of pensioners) would be eliminated. On the other hand, spouses would be eligible for benefits in their own right. Much greater assistance for children than for sole parents may be a means by which greater reliance could be placed on the individual as a unit". (Edwards, 1983, 43)

A further aspect of existing tax and social security provisions needing review is the high marginal tax rates facing low income people in the labour force. Unemployed people, casual workers and those on low pay can face effective marginal tax rates in excess of 100% (see graph 1).

Although this is often discussed in terms of work disincentives, it also can be assessed in terms of equity. Is it equitable to have higher marginal tax rates on the unemployed than on the highest income earners (even though average tax rates on the unemployed are negative)?

Since November 1983, the income test on unemployment benefits results in recipients losing $1 for each $1 of income from casual work, dividends or a spouse's income over the ranges:

$70p.w. to $119p.w. for single people
$70p.w. to $192p.w. for a couple
$70p.w. to $216p.w. for a couple with 2 children
$70p.w. to $240p.w. for a couple with 4 children

As income tax is payable when income from Unemployment Benefits (excluding children's payments) and earnings exceeds

$88p.w. for a single person
$142p.w. for a person with a dependent spouse
$154p.w. for a person with a dependent spouse and children.

There are substantial ranges of income over which unemployed people and part-time or casual workers face very high marginal tax rates. If other income tested programs (eg. public housing rent rebates, TEAS or child care charges) are also being withdrawn, and the Medicare levy is payable, taking a part-time job, or a spouse increasing his or her employment, can result in an individual or family suffering a *reduction* in disposable income.

This characteristic of existing provisions has been recognised by Podger, Raymond and Jackson, although they write only of the reductions in disposable weekly income and do not admit that, over certain ranges of income, recipients of several services can also suffer a reduction in annual disposable income by taking part-time employment.

> "Problems can occur where a beneficiary receives income from casual work. Tax instalments will generally be deducted from the earned income, while benefits will be reduced according to the gross earnings. At the time, therefore, a beneficiary's immediate disposable income may be reduced as a result of casual work. Although the effective marginal tax rate would not exceed 100% benefit withdrawal rate after final assessment at the end of the financial year, the beneficiary's decision whether to take up casual work might be influenced by the immediate effects".
> (Podger et al, 1980, 17)

Moreover, a poverty trap also arises because there is not a smooth withdrawal of unemployment benefits as earnings from employment increase. The income support formula for people in the category *unemployed* provides more assistance, for any given level of private income, than the income support provisions for low income individuals and two-parent families in the category *employed*. Casual, part-time or full-time work at a low rate of pay can result in a beneficiary having a sharp drop in total income because he or she is declared ineligible for any UB.

Therefore, even if an individual or family's income qualifies them for a part-payment of UB, income from employment can result in the Department of Social Security deciding that the beneficiary is no longer available for full-time employment and therefore ineligible for any UB payment. A couple with two children, for example, would receive a part-payment of UB of $146.20 if the man had $70 casual earnings (in Nov. 1983) or the wife had $70 income. In addition, the family would receive $55.35 per month family allowances. If the Department of Social Security decided that the family did not fit into the category unemployed, however, they would not receive the $146.20 per week and would receive only family allowance payments, and $24.00 Family Income Supplement. The unemployed husband with the opportunity of two day's work and $70.00 gross earnings, therefore faces not only the prospect of UB payments falling from $171.20 to $146.20 but also the possibility that he and his family will be put into the category employed and lose the $171.20 altogether (and have to apply for Family Income Supplement). Ignoring tax and other benefits, the family's income might thus fall from $183.97 to $106.77 (or $82.77 until FIS payments commence) because the taking of part-time employment resulted in the family being re-classified from one category to another.

Two changes would help overcome these poverty traps, although they would involve substantial changes to administrative arrangements and substantial payments to part-time workers. They would move existing arrangements even closer to a negative income tax scheme.

The first proposal is the poverty inquiry's suggestion that no two income tests operate at the same time and that benefits be withdrawn sequentially. For administration, however, this would seem to require a single transfer organisation handling Commonwealth social security and education payments and public housing rent rebates. Such a change would greatly reduce the incidence of poverty traps arising from several income or means tests operating at the same time.

The second proposal would abolish the category unemployed and would make payments to unemployed, part-time and low paid workers on the basis of an income or means test. (This change does not necessarily involve abolition of the work test; distinctions could still be made among those not employed at all). Payments would be withdrawn smoothly as income rises, and there would be no sudden loss of payments when applicants get part-time, casual or full-time work.

Even with the current 'harsh' income test this would be likely to redistribute substantial sums to part-time workers, and again points to the need for overhaul of the taxation system in order to ensure that the revenue is raised equitably.

C. Universal Income Support Schemes Based on the Individual

Some people regard it as so impracticable as to be a waste of time to examine income support provisions which would make payments without investigation of income and marital status, and would raise the necessary revenue through the taxation system.

On the other hand many welfare workers maintain that non-means tested payments based on the individual are the direction which income transfer provisions must take to provide income support for all women and children, to end poverty traps and lower effective marginal tax rates to eliminate stigma and to enable efficiency of administration.

Many of the beliefs are contained in the position adopted by welfare industry representatives at the economic summit in April 1983. According to an article by the Executive Director of VCOSS (Raysmith, 1983) the approach presented at the summit was worked out by Council of Social Services representatives from each state and territory.

> "The new call of welfare is to stop the [tax concession] handouts and to develop a universal and just taxation and income support system." (Raysmith, 1983, 20)

Means tests are described as residual measures, universal payments as structural. The continuation of the Family Income Supplement was criticised as "a pointed reminder of how easy it is to continue a 'more of the same' residual approach". "The nation had to cease taking the cheap option by segregating those on low incomes."

If replacement of existing means tested pensions and benefits with social dividend payments is a straw man, it appears to be one with a firm grip on the hearts, minds and energies of many in the welfare sector.

Two major barriers appear to block the way of social dividend schemes. The first, which applies to any income transfer scheme which would make significant payments simply on the basis of low income, is popular resentment of transfer payments to people who could be working. Alan Jordan points out that current provisions are nearly all based on inability to earn an income, rather than actual income.

> "Each pension or benefit is subject to an explicit or implicit work test. Even payment of special benefit, although commonly made on grounds of immediate hardship, is subject to the condition that the Director-General must satisfy himself that the claimant 'is unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for himself and his dependants' (section 124(c)). Lack of capacity to earn a livelihood is assumed to result from age, medical or family status in the cases of the aged, the invalid and the single parent, and from a combination of age, sex and marital status in the case of the class B widows' pensioner, unless the assumption is contradicted by the fact of the presence of income.
>
> Work testing can be seen as an adjunct to or aspect of income testing, concerned with capacity, intention, and therefore with the claimant's responsibility for his current circumstances and their continuation."
> (Jordan, 1981, 33)

The belief of many people that everyone ought to support themselves through work if they are able to do so, and their reluctance to make income support payments to able bodied people who are happy to live on income transfers, represent barriers to the acceptance of guaranteed income schemes.

Even the prolonged period of high unemployment rates (which might have pursuaded employed people that the low incomes of most unemployed people are the result of factors beyond the individual's control) may have done little to increase the willingness of wage and salary earners to pay the additional taxes needed for improved transfer arrangements. A tax system which makes the self-employed, professionals etc. make a fair contribution to tax revenue may thus be more likely to bring acceptance of the principle that 'need creates a right to assistance, whatever the causes of need'. (Jordan, 1981, 35)

A second barrier to the reduction of income inequality through social dividend schemes is that they involve, for any level of net redistribution, large increases in financial flows between the household and government sectors. The potential impact of non-means tested payments on the take-home pay of wage and salary earners and on government expenditure make this method of income redistribution vulnerable to attack by individual taxpayers (two thirds of whom **are men**), and the 'smaller government' business and economic management lobby.

The current Australian dependence on income tax for most revenue increases the visibility of social dividend schemes, 'though they could be financed by other means' (Manning, 1978). Stretton (1980, 45) points out that the only significant tax revolt in a country with generous welfare provisions was in Denmark, where a high proportion of taxes are direct.

While social dividend and negative income tax schemes can have the same net effect in terms of redistribution of income both vertically and horizontally, their impact on government outlays is substantially different.

Because social dividend schemes involve payments to all individuals or income units, without regard to income, the gross financial flows from government to consumers (minimum income payments) and from taxpayers to government (revenue to finance transfers and other government expenditure) are very large. This requires an increase in revenue (extra taxes on earnings, the introduction of new taxes, etc.) and increases the proportion of government revenue (or expenditure) as a proportion of non-farm Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Manning and Saunders recognize that, in this regard, negative income tax schemes have an advantage over social dividend proposals:

> "... under a negative income tax the balance of dividend owing to any family, and tax due from them is netted out and only the balance paid or demanded. The effect of this is to reduce the gross financial flow between the government and citizens, an effect which would have political advantages in a country where total government expenditure has the status of a magic number." (Manning and Saunders 1978, 57)

While changes in the level of transfer expenditure (such as occurred in 1976 when tax rebates were converted to cash payments (family allowances)) mean little in terms of the government sector's share of resources, the political impact of changes in the level of government expenditure may be far from trivial.

An OECD report suggests, for example, that taxpayers may not be indifferent to tax increases which reduce take home pay but provide a social dividend payment equal to the tax increase (Jackson has named this technical inefficiency).

> "It is well documented how taxpayers only loosely, if at all, link up their tax liability to the welfare benefits they receive. By having both the benefits and the tax within one scheme, the relationship between taxes and benefits becomes more apparent and the disincentive effects of taxation are lessened." (OECD, 1973, 24)

In addition to possible differences in work incentive effects between social dividend and comparably redistributive negative income tax schemes, Saunders and Pritchard (1978) have pointed to economic management problems associated with the Poverty Inquiry's proposal. These include difficulties of introducing further increases in net payments to low income groups, difficulties in financing increased expenditure on health, education and welfare services and increased demand management problems.

To estimate the size of the flows involved in guaranteed income schemes which make universal payments to all individuals, I set out in Table 5 some targets for weekly rates of income support and the payouts which they entail. (The bottom line of the table provides some figures relating to existing provisions as a basis for comparison).

TABLE 5 in here

The ALP's welfare policy includes a commitment to raising the adult pension to 25% of average weekly earnings. The Combined Pensioners Association argues for 30% of average earnings as the base level of pensions. Neither of these groups has specified what rates they propose for payments for children, payments for married couples, payments for sole parents and so on. In table 5 I have assumed children would receive 20% of the weekly adult rate. (This is approximately the current ratio of cash payments for children, (children's plus family allowance) to the single rate pension).

The Henderson Poverty Line for people in the labour force is the level needed to lift people who are looking for work clear of poverty.

Table 5 shows levels of expenditure 4 to 6 times the actual outlays in 1982-83, and suggests that the ideal of a comprehensive guaranteed income scheme making universal payments to every individual would require substantial reforms to the tax system in order to finance the outlays entailed.

While the average tax increases needed to finance the proposals shown in table 5 could be higher on high income earners and lower on the rest, the revenue required points to the desirability of looking beyond income tax as the basis for funding.

Before looking at some of these other revenue options, it is perhaps worth noting two common responses to the political problems associated with social dividend proposals. The approach adopted by the Poverty Inquiry was to reduce the level of social dividend payment to almost 75% of income units and to make full poverty line payments only to 'categorical' income units (approximately corresponding to present pensioner and beneficiary groups). Unfortunately this not only requires people to apply for the higher rate of social dividend whenever they become unemployed, single parents, sick etc, it also reintroduces substantial work disincentives for part-time workers, the unemployed and sick, and their spouses. These groups face a $1 for $1 income test on their income unit income when not employed, and the sudden drop from full to part-rate social dividend payment if they take a job.

A second response is to make social dividend payments only to part of the population, while spreading the (proportionally smaller) increases in taxes as widely as possible. Where the numbers of recipients are large, however, the outlays are still substantial. Jackson (1982) estimates, for example that a doubling of the 1982 family allowance rates would require increased outlays of $1,000m, compared with $150 million for the same increase with a (generous) income test on income unit income.

As income taxes paid by the rich are significantly less than the nominal scales indicate, the substantial revenue required for social dividend schemes results in redistribution from PAYE taxpayers to non-taxpayers (including tax avoiders) if financed through personal income tax. The larger the sums raised and disbursed, the greater the inequality between taxpayers and avoiders. A number of other tax changes were therefore examined for their revenue potential.

TABLE 6 in here

There are economic and social reasons, (as well as political!) why it might not be possible to implement all the tax options listed in Table 6. Mathews (1980, 22) for example, maintains that Australia has high taxes on business income relative to other OECD countries, so abolition of all expenditure and tax concessions which benefit industry could affect the viability of co-operatives and small businesses and increase unemployment. The redistributive effects of increases in income and other taxes may thus be quite different to the nominal change and would need to be examined by an inquiry into wealth and the tax system.

While there is considerable literature demonstrating that the net redistributive impact of social dividend schemes can be identical to income tested schemes, and that social dividend schemes have advantages in terms of administrative efficiency, these arguments appear to have made little headway with politicians or policy makers. Ironically AIDA perhaps sums up (helps create?) popular views on non-means tested payments to individuals.

> "Few would support the withdrawal of assistance to the needy - however it is time welfare went back to a needs-tested basis where it belongs ... extending welfare to the well-off was a cardinal error of the 1970's and needs to be reversed now." (AIDA, 1981, 1)

Ian Manning, the principal architect of the Poverty Inquiry's social dividend proposal thus concludes:

> "... it must be admitted that it would be difficult in the present Australian political climate to change from the existing system to a social dividend scheme by which both taxes and government would increase considerably. A great deal of effort has

been devoted to convincing the public of the supposedly dreadful effects of high taxes and high government expenditure, and the effects of this publicity cannot easily be overcome even by pointing out that the tax increase necessary to introduce a social dividend scheme would be cancelled out for most families by the new social dividend payments ... given that the present tax and social security systems even in their current chaos have the basic elements of a negative income tax, there is much to be said for designing a guaranteed income scheme on negative income tax principles."
(Ian Manning, 1981b, 2)

D. Introduction of a Negative Income Tax Scheme

The fourth popular method for reducing inequality is the introductin of a negative income tax scheme. This would be similar to existing income support provisions in that payments would be income or means tested on the basis of weekly income, with further adjustment at the end of each financial year. The scheme outlined would differ from existing provisions, however, in that low income (in relation to family size) would replace the present multiplicity of eligibility conditions, end of year adjustments would include payment of income support entitlements as well as adjusting tax payable, and rates of income support payment would be lifted to the at work poverty line.

Rather than trying to define new categories to help people who are slipping through the social security net, the negative income tax concept proposes a different basis for payment. The eligibility conditions of income and family size would provide that if an individual or family has a low income, relative to the number of people dependent on that income, that in itself would be adequate entitlement. Income support would be the obverse of the taxation system, where income above a certain level carries an obligation to pay tax. That obligation would be paralleled by a right to income support if income falls below a certain level.

One objection to this principal was discussed above in connection with social dividend schemes, namely, that society may not be willing to provide income support for people who it believes could work but who make no efforts to find work.

The negative income tax scheme discussed here would provide a payment equal to the Henderson at work poverty line. As table 5 shows, payment at these rates would provide substantial assistance to families on low income with children, unemployed people, students and single pensioners.

Table 7 shows the aggregate amounts that would have been paid out under the scheme in 1978/79. Updating the estimate of $8,338 million for the scheme in 1978-79 by the movement in the poverty line since then, and allowing for some increase in the numbers with low incomes by arbitrarily adding 10%, we obtain an estimated payout in 1982/83 of $14,300 million. These are ball park figures but suggest that for an extra $2,400 million above the budget allocation, Australia would get a comprehensive income support system that would lift all adult income units clear of poverty.

One of the aspects of this scheme needing review is income support provisions for young people. Further research is needed on the transition from being a dependent child at primary or secondary school to beinga separate individual whom society will assist if they cannot get work. Many questions are raised. Should levels of payment be increased with age; at what age and in what circumstances should payment be made to the young person rather than the parent; shuld payments be made to people while they are still at school; what educational, training and apprentice allowances should be incorporated into income support provisions?

This scheme assesses the amount of payment due on the basis of the combined income of the husband and wife. It is open to the criticism therefore, that it implies that income should be shared among all members of the family, and that some people will be in need because they do not receive a fair share of family income.

If families are not sharing their income then a negative income tax scheme, which denies payments to those with a high family income, can leave hardship for some members of those families. In single earner families this is likely to be the woman, because they are often the ones that society doesn't provide jobs for, doesn't provide training for, loads up with guilt if they do go out to work, etc. Women at home in high income families are the losers if society chooses a negative income tax approach rather than the social dividend approach to income support. Table 8 therefore addresses the question; what proportion of women with low incomes would receive assistance under the proposed comprehensive negative income tax package, and what proportion would miss out because of high joint income?

The figures available make it difficult to make precise estimates but they do suggest that, although there are substantial numbers of non aged couples and couples with one or two children where the women at home would not receive a negative income tax payment, overall, roughly 72% of women with low income would be recipients of a negative income tax payment.

The scheme need not involve abolition of family allowances but could develop as a mixed system. We would thus have a negative income tax scheme implemented in the short or medium term, and then, as funds permit, family allowances could be increased replacing part or all of the negative income tax payments.

While the negative income tax scheme outlined would provide a comprehensive income support system and more equitable rates of income support, three familiar problems would remain; how to raise the additional revenue needed for the proposal, how to co-ordinate the income support and tax systems and how to ensure that transfer provisions are progressive overall? For these answers I suggest we need better information about wealth and the options for restructuring the tax system.

A further barrier to the introduction of a negative income tax is likely to be opposition to the relatively high marginal tax rates which would be faced by a large proportion of the workforce. As discussed in the section on existing provisions, current marginal tax rates on unemployed people (and their spouses) can be 100% or more over substantial ranges of income (from $70 to over $200). The negative income tax scheme outlined provides a lower withdrawal rate than the existing system and provides more equitable treatment of the working poor.

The 50% marginal tax rate would be even higher if, as at present, the income tax system operates over much of the same range as income tested payments. This again points up the need for the integration or, at least, co-ordination of the payments and tax systems and a response to the argument that assets should be assessed for tax as well as pension purposes.

Negative income tax systems, and existing provisions, have also been criticised for low rates of take up of assistance by persons in need. Expenditure on the Famiy Income Supplement in 1982-83, for example, was less than two thirds of the amount budgetted. While firm statistical evidence for take up is limited (see the review by McVicar, forthcoming), apparently high take up of Australia's aged pensions and supporting parents benefits suggests that U.K. experience does not necessarily apply here and that there can be high take up of income tested payments. Two aspects of negative income tax proposals could assist take up; the simplification of eligibility by making low income (and assets) the basis of entitlement, and the integration of the tax and payments systems. The use of the tax system to identify people who have missed out on entitlements during the year could be a very effective means of improving take up, while the integration of the two systems could both speed adjustment of payments as people change from recipient to taxpayer status (and vice versa) and reduce fraud.

The transformation of existing social security provisions into a guaranteed income scheme of the negative income tax type could be achieved by a number of incremental steps. Some of these steps would need to be preceeded by further debate about social values (rights to income support, rights to a share of family income), and detailed planning of administration. Without debate and changes to the tax system as well, however, economic inequality is likely to go on increasing. The controversy about the treatment of assets for pension purposes is an important part of the political process of bringing about an equitable income support system. A similar debate, and statistical data to inform it, is needed for the transfer system as a whole.

CONCLUSION

Since the early 1970's there have been many government and academic studies of taxation and income security provisions and a large number of (at times conflicting) recommendations have been made. It is the contention of this paper that these studies have been hampered by inadequate information on the distribution of wealth and thus the needs and capacity to pay of different groups. While some improvements have been made to the income security system in recent years, tax avoidance and the erosion of the tax base now appear to block further improvements and even threaten the continuation of the meager levels of support provided. (eg. proposals to 'freeze' levels of pensions and benefits).

Information from a survey of assets and income and the implications for the pensions and taxation systems are urgently needed ingredients for the public debate on taxation and income support provisions. As shown above, there are substantial deficiencies in existing income transfer programs. However, effective changes to income distribution programs constantly run into the barriers of shortages of revenue and the divergence between nominally progressive but effectively regressive income tax scales. Information from a survey and inquiry into wealth and the tax system could substantially improve the chance of policies to overcome these barriers.

TABLE 1: SOME INDICATORS OF INCOME INEQUALITY AMONG INDIVIDUALS; AUSTRALIA, 1973-74, 1978-79, 1981-82

	Proportion of total income received by		Gini Coefficient
	Top 10%	Bottom 20%	
Males			
1973-74	19.2	4.9	0.346
1978-79	23.5	4.9	0.345
1981-82	25.0	3.6	0.39
Females			
1973-74	31.9	1.4	0.532
1978-79	29.7	1.9	0.480
1981-82	31.4	1.4	0.50
Persons			
1973-74	29.6	1.5	0.49
1978-79	27.8	2.7	0.44
1981-82	29.0	1.9	0.47

SOURCE: ABS, Income Distribution, Individuals, 1973-74, 1978-79, 1981-82

TABLE 2: PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF INCOME OF INDIVIDUALS WHO RECEIVED INCOME, 1973-4, 1978-9, 1981-2

Principal Source	1973-4	1978-9	1981-2
Males			
Wages and salaries	75.1	67.1	57.0
Own business, profession, partnership	12.5	14.1	15.9
Government cash benefits	9.3	15.0	18.2
Superannuation	1.0	1.4	1.5
Interest, rent dividends	1.9	1.9	5.9
Other	0.3	0.6	1.5
TOTAL %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number '000	4,466.8	4,810.9	4,874.8
Females			
Wages and salaries	46.1	41.4	32.9
Own business, profession, partnership	6.2	7.9	9.1
Government cash benefits	41.0	43.2	45.5
Superannuation	0.5	0.5	0.7
Interest, rent, dividends	5.3	6.2	10.3
Other	0.8	1.5	0.9
TOTAL %	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number '000	4,265.6	4,779.6	4,787.9

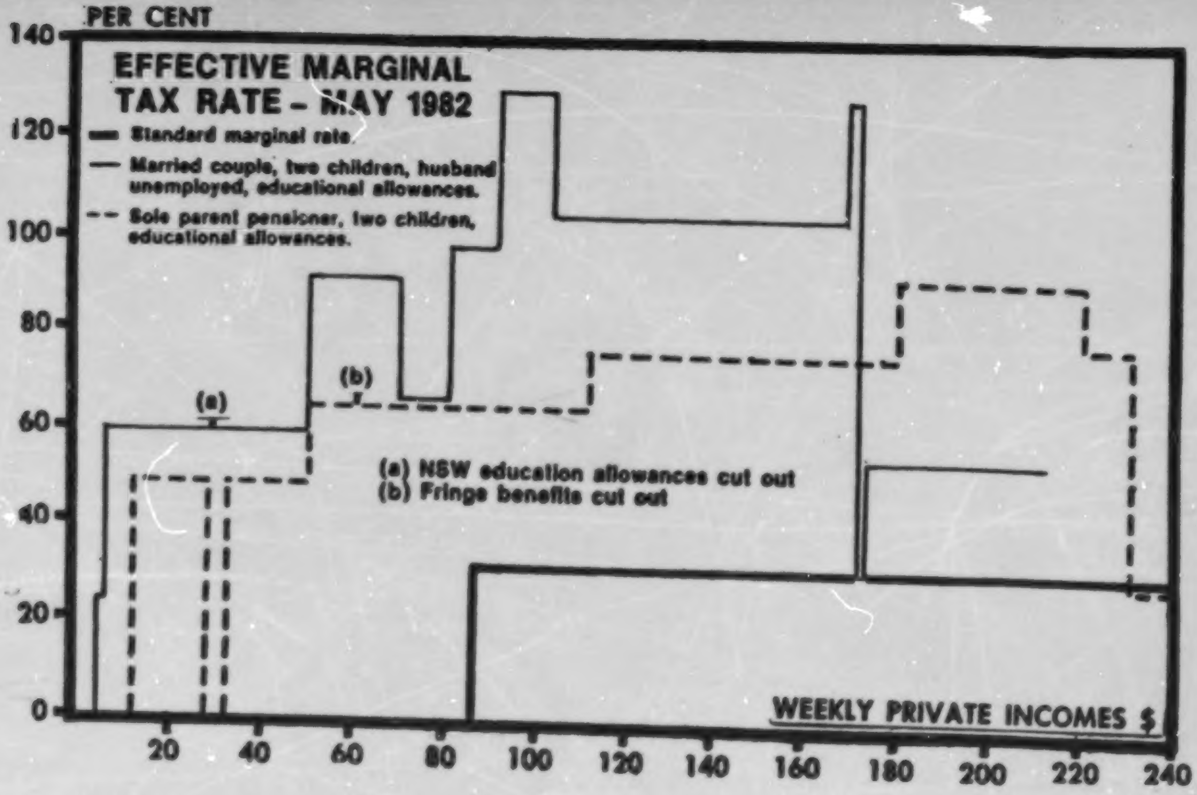
SOURCE: ABS, Income Distribution, Individuals, 1973-74, 1978-79, 1981-82

TABLE 3: ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL EMPLOYMENT LEVELS IN 1974 AND 1981

	Males	Married Females	Other Females
1974			
Actual weeks of employment '000	191,227	43,511	31,959
Potential weeks of employment '000	221,910	145,844	54,740
Labour utilisation %	86.2	29.8	58.4
1981			
Actual weeks of employment '000	206,020	59,417	41,351
Potential weeks of employment '000	253,838	154,913	77,771
Labour utilisation %	81.2	38.4	53.2

Notes: Actual full-time equivalent weeks is calculated on the assumption that 2 part-time weeks equal one full-time week.
Potential weeks are calculated on the assumption that all males aged 20-65 could work up to 52 weeks and all females aged 20-60 could work up to 52 weeks.
Labour utilisation = $\frac{\text{actual}}{\text{potential}} \times 100$

Source: ABS Labour Force Experience 1974 & 1981



GRAPH 1: SOME EFFECTIVE MARGINAL TAX RATES - MAY 1982

Source: M. Edwards, 1983, 21

TABLE 4: CATEGORIES OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRANSFER SCHEMES

	Payments basis		
Eligibility Principle	Earnings related	Income tested	Social-dividend
Many separate categories	1 Woodhouse and Hancock Recommendations for some groups	2 Most existing pensions and benefits.	3 Family allowance and pensions for some groups
Few categories	4	5 Negative Income Tax concept.	6 Poverty Inquiry Guaranteed Income Proposal

TABLE 5: SOME GUARANTEED INCOME SCHEMES BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL AND HAVING NO INCOME TEST ON PAYMENTS: 1982-83

	Rate per week		Payout[a]	Extra tax per taxpayer[c]
	Adults	Under 14	$m p.a.	$per week
25% of Average Weekly Earnings,[d] with children (under 14) at 20% of the adult rate	85.40	17.10	52,012	126
30% of Average Weekly Earnings, children 20%	102.45	20.45	62,414	159
Henderson (Labour Force) Poverty Line	104.20	28.15	64,873	167
20% above Poverty Line	125.05	33.80	77,857	209
1982-83 Actual[b]	77.25	15.26 to 20.51	12,726	-

[a] Based on 1981 Census figures of 3,726,069 people under 14,774,264 people 15-18 and 10,191,851 people 18 and over.

[b] Weekly rates are for single rate pensioners at Dec. 1982 and for the 1st and 5th child. Payout includes cash transfers to pensioners and beneficiaries, TEAS, family allowances.

[c] Income Tax Statistics for 1980-81 show 5,999,250 taxpayers

[d] December 1982 Average Weekly Earnings for male employees = $341.5; household disposable income per capita = $144.70 (revised)

TABLE 6: SOME REVENUE OPTIONS

NOTE: There may be some double counting among these items. Also the economic political and social effects of some changes are likely to prevent them being implemented. Thus, no overall estimate has been attempted.

TAX	POTENTIAL REVENUE MILLION P.A.	SOURCE
Capital Gains Tax	$1,000 to $1,300	Parliamentary Research Service
Resource Tax	$250 to $400	" " "
Wealth Tax - Annual Net Worth Tax	$400 to $1,000	Prof. P. Groenewegan Age 24.10.1980
Probate Tax	$200	A.C.O.S.S.
Tax Avoidance	$1,200 to $3,000 to $7,000	Sydney Morning Herald 11.8.82 ALP Policy on Tax Avoidance Mr. Hayden, Courier Mail 20.5.82
Underground Economy	$4,400 to $5,600	Commercial Bank study of 1980 estimated income involved of $11,000m in 1978-79 Age 10.6.82 estimated income involved of $14,000m.
Increase Company Tax by 76 per cent	$3,800	This would lift company tax revenue in 1982-83 to the percentage it contributed in 1970-71.
Abolish remaining superannuation concessions.	$2,480	1983-84 Budget Paper No. 1

TABLE 6 Cont'd

TAX		POTENTIAL REVENUE MILLION P.A.	SOURCE
Abolish	Dependent spouse rebate	$888	1980-81 figure from 1982-83 Budget paper
	Sole Parent rebate	$53	" " " " " "
	Pensioner rebate	$36	Full year estimated cost. Budget paper 1982-83
	Dependent child rebate	$210	" " " " " "
All Category A Industry Concessions (includes an investment allowance, stock valuation adjustment, a primary producer averaging rebates).		$788	Estimate for 1982-83 from 1983-84 Budget Paper No. 1

TABLE 7: NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF INCOME UNITS TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS FROM A NEGATIVF INCOME TAX SCHEME PROVIDING A GUARANTEED INCOME EQUAL TO THE HENDERSON POVERTY LINE (FOR PEOPLE 21 AND OVER)[a] AND REDUCING PAYMENTS BY 50¢ FOR EACH $1 OF OTHER INCOME 1978-79

INCOME UNIT TYPE	TOTAL NO. '000	NO. OF RECIPIENTS '000	%	PAYMENTS $m p.a.	%
Couples with children	1,853.9	821.9	44.3	1,934.6	23
One parent families	218.7	186.3	85.2	759.7	9
Aged singles	648.0	600.1	92.6	1,908.0	23
Aged couples	403.3	338.6	84.0	1,355.0	16
Non-aged couples	1,076.1	263.2	24.5	653.8	8
Single people 21 - aged	1,415.9	548.1	38.7	1,244.0	15
Single people under 21	709.6	390.0	55.0	483.3	6
TOTAL	6,325.9	3,148.2	49.8	8,338.4	100

[a] In this version the rate for non-dependents under 21 is an average of 2/3 of the adult rate.

TABLE 8: WOMEN WITH INCOMES BELOW THE HENDERSON POVERTY LINE; APPROXIMATE NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE WHO WOULD RECEIVE A NEGATIVE INCOME TAX PAYMENT

INCOME UNIT TYPE	WOMEN'S INCOME LESS THAN $3,000 (1978-9)	NO. WHO WOULD RECEIVE A PAYMENT BECAUSE HUSBAND'S INCOME ALSO LOW[a] OR, NOT MARRIED	
	'000	'000	%
Aged couple	301.0	271.8	90
Non-aged couple	460.1	179.9	39
Couples, 1 child	318.7	150.8	47
Couples, 2 children	434.4	247.5	57
Couples, 3 or more children	300.6	226.3	75
One parent families (including some males)	19.3	19.3	100
Females 60 and over[b]	606.9	606.9	100
Females 21 - 60	94.6	94.6	100
Females under 21	110.0	110.0	100
	2,645.6	1,907.1	72

[a] Low income - here equals an income below the level at which the negative income tax payment cuts out: for couples approximately $9,000; couples + 1 child $11,000; couples + 2 children $13,000; couples 3 or more children $16,000; one parent families $10,000; single adults $7,000 young people $5,000

[b] some double counting with aged couples

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Single parent families and social policies: Australia and Sweden: A comparative study

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INTRODUCTION

The object of this paper is to examine the three major sources of income support available to single parent families in Australia: social security and cash transfers for children; earned income from the parents' labour force participation; and intra-family transfers, i.e., maintenance payments from the non-custodial parent. The analysis centres on the trends in labour force participation and proportions in receipt of pensions and benefits in the period 1974-1982; and the incentives and disincentives to paid employment for male and female single parents. The analysis also focuses on the adequacy of transfer payments, tax treatments and services, (labour force training, childcare and housing) as they apply to single parents. On each of these issues comparisons are made with the economic situation and tax/transfer treatments of single parent families in Sweden - so as to identify the major characteristics of single parent family policies in both countries. A comparative analysis of this nature provides insights into policy alternatives which have been developed to respond to similar family forms and processes, and allows for evaluation of the adequacy of alternative policies.

The alternatives of single parent families' reliance on paid employment , social security payments or maintenance from the non-custodial parent (or on combinations of all three) present issues not only of the adequacy of income derived from these sources - but the extent to which each of these sources of income encourage dependency and social marginality (and often poverty) or promote independence and social participation for the custodial parent and his/her children.

(I) SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES IN AUSTRALIA: INCIDENCE, MAJOR SOURCES OF INCOME SUPPORT AND OTHER SOCIAL POLICIES

(i) Incidence of Single Parent Families:

One source of data on family type in Australia is the A.B.S. series "Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families". This series compares the incidence of two parent families with dependent children and other families with dependent children. A dependent child is defined as a person under 15 years of age, or aged 15 to 20 years if a full-time student without a spouse or offspring and living with his or her parent(s) or family head. Table 1 presents data on families with dependent children by family type. The table shows that non-married heads with dependent children as a proportion of all families with dependent children have increased from 9.00% in 1974 to 14.11% in 1982. Female headed families have accounted for about 85% of all these families. The definition of other families with dependent children used here is broader than one parent families and could include, for example, families with dependent children which were headed by an elder brother or sister. No doubt the overwhelming majority of these families would, however, be single-parent families.

TABLE 1 in here

Another source of data on family type are the two A.B.S. family surveys conducted in 1975 (A.B.S., 1980a) and 1982 (A.B.S.,1982a). The 1975 survey found that 9.0% of all families with dependent children were single-parent families of which 88.1% were headed by women, whereas the 1982 survey reported that 12.3% of all families were single-parent families with 90.5% headed by women. The two family surveys are not strictly comparable, however, as the definition of "dependent children" differs between them. In the 1975 survey a dependent child was defined as a person aged 17 years or younger who was neither married nor a parent. The 1982 survey defines a dependent child as a person under 15 years of age, or aged between 15 and 20 years if a full-time student without a spouse or offspring living with his or her parent(s).

A comparison between the two surveys does give some indication of how the profile of single parent families has changed between 1975 and 1982. One important characteristic of single parents which has changed is marital status. Table 2 presents the percentage of single parents by sex and marital status for the years 1975 and 1982. For female single parents, the proportions who are separated or, especially, widowed have decreased while the proportions divorced or never married have increased markedly.

TABLE 2 in here

The data in Table 2 are, however, slightly misleading for female single parents since the category "Never Married" includes women with children from a de-facto relationship which has ended as well as other never married women. This is an important distinction as shown by figures from the Department of Social Security. The Annual Reports from the Department of Social Security disaggregate the marital status of female single parents on widows' pensions or supporting parents' benefits into widowed, divorced, separated wife, unmarried mother and de-facto wife. The proportion of legally unmarried female single parent beneficiaries who are ex de-facto wives has increased from 18.8% in 1974 to 28.2% in 1982. So although by 1982 female single parents who have never been married as a proportion of all female single parent pensioners and beneficiaries had increased by 25.8% (to 19.0%), ex de-facto wives as a proportion had more than doubled (to 7.5%) (Department of Social Security, 1983a).

The increase in the proportion of single parents who are divorced (in comparison with the decrease in the proportion who are separated) in the period 1975 to 1982 reflects the implementation of the Family Law Act in early 1976. The new divorce legislation allowed for the formalisation of previously existing separations, and also allowed for a more rapid transition from separation to divorce with the introduction of the 12 month separation rule. The combined categories: separated and divorced (which indicate a similar social situation, i.e., the cessation of a formal marriage relationship) accounted for approximately 62% of single parents in 1975 and for 67% in 1982. If we take into account the proportion of unmarried female single parent beneficiaries who are separated de-facto wives (28%) and the proportion of unmarried male single parent beneficiaries who are separated de-facto husbands (87%) (Department of Social Security, 1982 :25), we can infer that approximately one quarter of never married female single parents and 85% of never married male single parents are in fact separated de-facto partners. It would therefore appear that at least 85% of female headed single parent families and almost all male headed single parent families are formed following the cessation (either by separation, divorce or death) of a marriage or a marriage-like relationship.

(ii) Social Security and Transfers to Children:

A very high percentage of female single parents in Australia is receiving government income support and the percentage of all single parents receiving support has increased in the period 1974 to 1981 (Table 3). The proportion of male single parents receiving income support increased by 9 percentage points between 1974 and 1981 and the proportion of female single parents increased by 19 percentage points. One possible explanation for the increase of male single parents is that in November 1977 males became eligible for supporting parents' benefit. But the data in Table 3 show that this is at best a partial explanation. Between 1977 and 1979 there was no increase in the percentage of male single parents on income support and more than half of the increase for the period 1974-1981 occurred before the granting of the supporting parents' benefit to men.

TABLE 3 in here

The explanation for the increase in the percentage of all single parents receiving income support is more likely to be found in connection with the increase in unemployment rates and perhaps also with the steady dismantling of Australia's universal health care system. In the period 1974 to 1982 the proportion of female headed, single parent families where the parent was employed (the employment to population ratio) fell from 43.4% to 35% and the corresponding decrease for male headed, single parent families was from 90.7% to 74.9% (Table 4). Not only did unemployment rates increase for both males and females in this period (by 7 percentage points for women and by 6 percentage points for men), but labour force participation rates also fell (by 6 percentage points for women and by 11 percentage points for men). The increase in unemployment rates and the decrease in labour force participation rates for all heads of single parent families, whether male or female, indicate the effects of the worsening labour market situation on the job opportunities of lone parents responsible for the care of dependent children.

Before the extension of the supporting parents' benefit to men in late 1977, the increasing numbers of male single parents receiving government income support were dependent on other pensions and benefits: in 1976, 62% were in receipt of unemployment, sickness and special benefit and 38% were in receipt of age, invalid and service pensions. In 1981, 62% of male single parents receiving government income support were in receipt of the supporting parents' benefit, 18% were in receipt of unemployment, sickness and special benefit and 21% were in receipt of pensions (Development Division, Department of Social Security, 1982:56). The availability of the supporting parents' benefit for sole fathers from 1977 therefore extended the range of income support available for supporting fathers without job opportunities, in fact providing a benefit which took somewhat more account of parenting responsibilities. The provision of the benefit cannot be seen as providing an alternative to employment but rather as providing an alternative form of income maintenance.

The deteriorating labour market situation of female single parents (their increased unemployment rates and decreased labour force participation rates) is reflected in the increasing proportion in receipt of income support in the period 1974 to 1981. Throughout most of this period approximately 88% of women sole parents receiving income support were in receipt of Class A Widows' Pension or supporting parent benefit. In 1981 this proportion increased to 95% when the responsibility for the initial income maintenance of supporting mothers was transferred from the States to the Commonwealth (Development Division, Department of Social Security, 1982:56). What is clear therefore is that in a period of decreasing labour market opportunities, a significantly increased proportion of single parents, both male and female, have become dependent on social security, predominantly on those forms of income maintenance which take greater account of parenting responsibilities by providing a guardian's allowance, supplementary assistance for recipients in private rental accommodation and by exempting the additional benefit paid for children from tax. The widows' pension and the supporting parents' benefit provide these additional benefits, in contrast to unemployment, sickness and special benefit. (The guardian's allowance and tax exemption for the children's allowance were extended to these beneficiaries in the 1983/84 budget.)

However, it must be noted that while the employment to population ratio fell for both male and female single parents and while the proportions in receipt of social security increased for both men and women, women continued to be very much more likely than men to be in receipt of some form of income maintenance. In 1974 women single parents were seven times more likely than men to be in receipt of pension or benefit; by 1981 women were still five times more likely than men to be receiving income maintenance (Table 3). Although deteriorating labour market opportunities from 1974 affected adversely the job opportunities of both men and women single parents, women continued to have much greater dependence on government income support. Of all single parents in receipt of income maintenance in 1974, 98% were women. By 1981 this proportion had declined by only 2 percentage points and women accounted for 96% of all single parents in receipt of pension or benefit (Development Division, Department of Social Security, 1982:56). The situation of single parent families in the social security system is therefore predominantly (in fact almost entirely) a situation which affects women and their children, even though 10 per cent of single parent families are male headed. The disproportionate representation of families headed by women amongst single parent families in receipt of income maintenance is a consequence of the disadvantaged labour market situation of women with dependent children.

TABLE 4 in here

The increase in the percentage of single parents receiving income support at a time of increasing unemployment coincided with the gradual dismantling of the universal health scheme by the coalition Government. In November 1978 compulsory health insurance was abolished and only a universal medical benefit of 40% of scheduled fees remained. Medibank-level benefits remained for pensioners with Pensioner Health Benefit cards and for "disadvantaged persons". From September 1981 all universal medical benefits were abolished. Free hospital treatment and medical benefits at 85% level were now restricted to pensioners with PHB cards and low income earners with health cards (Deeble, 1982). Over this period access to a PHB card became more critical for single parents. Also, prior to 1st November 1979, single parents on supporting parents' benefit were not eligible for a PHB card, so since this date the benefit has become more valuable to single parents, providing access to health care for themselves and their children which might otherwise have been restricted by cost.

Further indication of the effects of the state of the labour market and of government policies on the economic circumstances of single parents is provided in Table 5. This table shows the proportion of single parents in receipt of income support who were also receiving extra income (from earnings or maintenance payments); supplementary rental assistance and fringe benefits including the Pensioner Health Benefit) in the period 1973 to 1982.

Single parents in receipt of social security confront the problem of the income limit on extra earnings; which involves high rates of withdrawal of pension or benefit and loss of eligibility for supplementary assistance and fringe benefits when earnings exceed the stipulated limit. Thus while job opportunities have decreased as a result of the recessions since 1974, social security policies have also placed restrictions on permissible earnings from employment.[1]

TABLE 5 in here

Table 5 shows that in the period 1973 to 1982 the proportion of single parents on pension or benefit who have no extra income has increased (markedly so for supporting parent beneficiaries) and the proportion of beneficiaries on full benefit has similarly increased. Increasing proportions of pensioners and beneficiaries have retained their eligibility for supplementary assistance, i.e., they do not have extra earnings sufficient to lose rental assistance. Two-thirds of female single parent beneficiaries were in receipt of supplementary assistance in 1982 indicating the higher proportions in private rental accommodation; and at least half of male single parents and 40% of widow pensioners were also in receipt of supplementary assistance. This trend indicates not only the importance of such extra assistance for single parents in rental accommodation, but also the lack of opportunity for extra earnings from paid employment sufficient to compensate for the loss of this extra assistance.

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[1] The current income limits for a sole parent on supporting parents' benefit or widows' pension with one child over six years are:

(i) the maximum pension or benefit is payable if weekly income does not exceed $36.00;

(ii) income in excess of $36.00 a week reduces the rate payable by 50¢ in the dollar; no pension or benefit is payable when weekly income reaches $243.80 (from 1 November 1983);

(iii) all other income reduces the rate of Supplementary Assistance payable by 50¢ in the $1; no assistance is payable when extra income reaches $26.00;

(iv) no pensioner fringe benefits entitlement when other weekly income reaches $74.00; from 1 November 1983 this is to be increased to $77.00 a week. (Department of Social Security, 1983b and 1983-84 Budget Paper No.1)

The percentage of single parent pensioners and beneficiaries with extra earnings not exceeding Level 3 (i.e., earning just enough to retain fringe benefits, in particular the health benefit card) has increased in the period under review: 89% of widow pensioners, 93% of female supporting parents and 90% of male supporting parents were in receipt of the pensioner health benefit card in 1982. This suggests not only that the opportunity for extra earnings is limited, but also that health coverage is a critical issue for single parent families.

This latter conclusion is supported by data from the A.B.S. Health Insurance Survey (1982b) which found that of single parents who did not have a health concession card (and who did not think that they were eligible for one), 20% did not have private health insurance. Only 10% of married couples with dependent children in a similar situation were uninsured. Of the uninsured single parents, more than half cited cost as the main reason for their lack of private cover.

In conclusion, it is clear that in the period 1973 to 1982 an increasing proportion of single parents in receipt of social security are on full benefit (77% of widow pensioners, 88% of female supporting parents and 86% of male supporting parents in 1982); an increasing proportion have no extra income (57% of widow pensioners, 77% of female supporting parents and 81% of male supporting parents); an increasing proportion are in receipt of supplementary assistance; and an increasing proportion are in receipt of the pensioner health benefit card - indicating both reduced opportunities for extra earnings and the value of supplementary assistance and health cover when employment opportunities are restricted. Once again it must be remembered that the population of families involved in these changes are almost entirely (in 96% of instances) families of women and their children.

It is difficult to estimate the average duration of single parents' receipt of income support because the Department of Social Security's figures are inadequate on this question. It was estimated in 1981 that the average current durations of Class A widows and supporting parent beneficiaries were:

Class A Widows = 4.5 years
Female S.P.B. = 2.1 years
Male S.P.B. = 1.6 years
Total = 3.1 years

A separate analysis of all cancellations (including deaths but excluding transfers to other income support) of Class A widows' and supporting parent beneficiaries for the year 1979-80 showed that average completed duration was also about 3 years (Development Division, Department of Social Security, 1982:59).

While it has been shown that increasing numbers and increasing proportions of single parents and their children are dependent on income support for their economic survival since the mid 1970s, other figures show that the relative value of this income support has declined over this period. Table 6 presents data on the income of single parents in receipt of income support expressed as a percentage of net average weekly earnings.

TABLE 6 in here

As a proportion of net average weekly earnings, income support for single parents reached a peak of 51% for a parent with two children in 1976-77. Since then this proportion has declined to the 1981-82 level of 44%.

Not only has the economic position of single parents on benefit worsened since 1976-77 relative to post-tax average earnings, it has also worsened relative to other groups on government income maintenance. Table 7 shows the income position of single parents on pension or benefit relative to other income units dependent on government income maintenance. The net income position of a pensioner couple without children and not paying rent has been taken as the standard or benchmark situation and set at 1.00. The income situations of other beneficiaries, like that of single parents, have been expressed as a proportion of this base (Whiteford, 1983:1-2).

TABLE 7 in here

For single parents with two children who are renting, income from government pension as a ratio of the income of a pensioner couple without children (who were not renting) rose from .98 in 1964-65 to a peak of 1.07 in 1968-69, falling to .95 in 1982-83. The income ratio of single parents with two children who are not renting rose from .94 in 1964-65 to .99 in 1968-69 and fell to .88 in 1982-83. In contrast, the income ratio of single pensioners without children who are renting rose from .59 to .67 in 1973-74 where it remained steady, while the ratio for single pensioners without children who are not renting reached its peak in 1976-77 at .60 where it remained stable. The most significant recent watershed in the relative position of all pensioners with children was the year 1976-77, from which time the relative financial position of pensioners with children deteriorated progressively. Even the increases which will apply in 1984 (to guardian's and children's allowances) will restore relativities only to 1978-79 levels (in most cases).

The reason for the deterioration of the financial position of sole parent pensioners and beneficiaries (and of most pensioners and beneficiaries with children) relative to the position of other pensioners and beneficiaries without children is due to the non-indexation of the several components of income support for children. The value of most pensions and benefits has increased in the period 1976-77 to 1982-83 because of twice-yearly indexation in accordance with the Consumer Price Index (except in the case of benefits for the single unemployed without dependents).

There are three components of income support for children received by single parent pensioners and beneficiaries: firstly, the guardian's allowance which has been increased by only $2 since 1969. Presently the allowance is $8 a week where there is a child under 6 or an invalid child or $6 a week where there are other children. The 1983-84 budget standardised the allowance at $8 a week from May 1984.

The second component is the child allowance for pensioners. This has been increased by only $2.50 since 1975 and is presently $10 a week per child. The 1983-84 budget increased the allowance by $2 a week from November 1983. Although the 1983-84 budget increased both the guardian's and child allowance for pensioners, as Table 7 shows the estimated effect of these increases in June 1984 is basically to maintain the existing relativities between pensioners and beneficiaries with children and other pensioners (Whiteford, 1983).

The third income support component for single parents related to the presence of children is family allowances, which all families with children receive. Family allowances are not indexed, hence do not increase regularly. Table 8 shows how the value of family allowances for two children as a proportion of average weekly earnings has fallen since their introduction in July 1976, from a peak of 4.7% in 1976 to a low of 2.6% in 1982. Although the rates of family allowances for the first and second child in the family were increased by 50% from November 1982, this returned them to only 3.7% of average weekly earnings: the real value of family allowances has fallen by 23% in the period June 1976 to March 1983 (Cass, 1983:16).

It is not surprising that the Social Welfare Policy Secretariat's report on poverty measurement found that "Couples with children are more likely than those without to have low incomes in relation to their needs while single parents are among the neediest of groups" (S.W.P.S.,1981:204). The Secretariat estimated that 36.3% of sole parent income units had incomes below the Henderson poverty line based on the 1978-79 A.B.S. income survey - almost exactly the same percentage reported by the Poverty Commission Inquiry based on the 1973-74 income survey (36.8%) (S.W.P.S., 1981:176).

TABLE 8 in here

(iii) Employment Status

The employment situation of single parent families deteriorated significantly in the period 1974 to 1982 as shown in Table 4 (discussed previously).

From 1974 to 1982 there was an increase of 68% in the number of single parent families, and an increase of 98% in the number of single parent families where the parent was not employed. Although there was for both males and females a decrease in labour force participation rates by 11 percentage points and 6 percentage points respectively, the unemployment rates in the same period for both males and females more than doubled. There was a significant increase in unemployment rates for single parents from 1981 to 1982, which must be an underestimate of the numbers unemployed. Many single parents not in the labour force could be classified as discouraged job seekers. Stricker & Sheehan (1981) have estimated that there are as many hidden as recorded unemployed. An A.B S. survey (1982c) found that 88% of discouraged job seekers were female. Also, as the difference between their proportion of the labour force and their proportion of the unemployed shows, female single parents have a share of unemployment which is two-thirds greater than their labour force representation.

Table 9 compares the labour force participation rates of single females with children and married females with children for the period 1974 to 1982. Although the labour force participation rate of single females with children has decreased over this period, the rate for married females with children has increased. This latter situation may be partly explained by the great increase in part-time employment: between August 1974 and 1981 part-time job growth accounted for about three-quarters of the overall rise in the employment of women (Office of Status of Women, 1983:25). As suggested in the previous section, part-time employment appears to represent a less viable option for single parents who require full-time employment to compensate them for the loss of benefit and fringe benefits like the Pensioner Health Card which are withdrawn as extra earnings increase. The low marginal income retention rates which are imposed when pensioners' and beneficiaries' earnings exceed the extra earnings limit (and the loss of valued fringe benefits) make either full-time employment or full benefit the most economically feasible options. This has occurred when opportunities for full-time employment for women have decreased and part-time employment has increased relative to full-time employment.

TABLE 9 in here

Part-time employment is concentrated in occupations where women are over-represented: in 1983 over half the women employed in the entertainment, recreation and personal service industries were employed part-time; as were 37% of women in the community services; 43% of women in wholesale and retail trades. In August 1983 of all part-time workers, 78% were women (A.B.S., 1983a). In July 1982 of all female single parents with dependent children who were employed, 40% were employed part-time. The corresponding proportion for employed male single parents was 8% (A.B.S., 1983b). It would appear therefore that the much greater proportion of female single parents in receipt of government income maintenance in comparison with male single parents (84% and 19% respectively) is a consequence partially of the greater opportunities for full-time employment for men, and partially of the ideology of gender divisions in parenthood which prescribe dependency (either on husband or government benefit) as appropriate for women, but much less appropriate for men.

Further indication of the importance of full-time employment for female single parents is shown in Table 10 which compares the distribution of full-time and part-time employment for married women with dependent children and for female single parents in July 1982. Whereas single parents were less likely than wives to be employed (35% were employed compared with 43% of wives), employed single parents were much more likely to be in full-time work (60.4%) than were employed wives (43.6%).

TABLE 10 in here

If we are correct in our assumption that single parents who are employed require adequate income to compensate for the expenditure of time and effort and loss of benefit, then we would expect that single parents who can command a higher wage are more likely to be employed than others. This is what we do find. Firstly, a far higher proportion of male than female single parents are employed: 75% of men compared with 35% of women in 1982 (Table 4). There are a number of reasons for this (e.g., age of youngest child) but not the least of which must be relative rates of pay. The 1978-79 Income Survey showed that male single parents who worked full-year, full-time earned on average $16,130; the corresponding figure for females was $11,000 or 68% of male earnings (A.B.S.,1982d).

Secondly, when we examine female single parents' labour force status, we find that there is an increased likelihood of labour force participation with an increase in educational qualifications. (Table 11).

TABLE 11 in here

The A.B.S. Family Survey in 1975 found that female single parents' labour force participation rates were higher with higher levels of educational qualifications, and that the proportions employed full-time also increased with educational qualifications. Women who had left school at 16 years or younger accounted for 68% of female single parents; at least 60% were not in the labour force and approximately one in five were employed full-time. In comparison, women who left school at 17 years (and who did not have further qualifications) constituted 6% of single parents; 49% were not in the labour force and one in three were employed full-time. Of women single parents with a technical certificate (6% of female single parents) 34% were not in the labour force and four out of ten were employed full-time; of women single parents with a tertiary qualification (3% of the total), only 10% were not in the labour force and more than half were employed full-time (Table 11).

Data from the A.B.S. Income Distribution Survey 1978/79 show that the median income of full-year, full-time employed women increased with higher educational attainment (Table 12). It would appear therefore that the opportunity to be employed, in particular to be employed full-time and hence to earn secure and adequate income, sufficient for family needs (which constitutes the most viable alternative to dependence on full benefit) is directly related to educational qualifications. Post-school qualifications were enjoyed by only a minority (26%) of female single parents in 1975; of these, 52% had "other" qualifications. The 1975 survey does not give precise details about this category of qualifications but notes it includes qualifications such as shorthand and typing, special language courses, writing courses and specialist technical courses. Most likely, the majority of women with "other" qualifications would have had shorthand and/or typing skills. In comparison, 48% of male single parents had post-school qualifications and of these 73% had trade qualifications and only 5% had "other" qualifications (unpublished data from the A.B.S. 1975 Family Survey). Data from the A.B.S. 1982 Family Survey, when available, will be extremely important for examining the trends in educational qualification and labour force participation of single parents in the period of recession.

TABLE 12 in here

All employed women in Australia confront a sex-segmented labour market. The occupations in which women are concentrated are characterised by low pay, low status and limited career opportunities. Figures presented by the Office of the Status of Women (1983:19-21) suggest that there has been little change in the level of occupational segregation of women and men between 1973 and 1982: in 1981 over 80% of women in paid employment were concentrated in only 18 of the 60 A.B.S. occupation-categories, and of these 18, 6 contained over 60% of women. Further, even within the occupations where women predominate, men tend to hold the higher level decision-making jobs. The financial effect of this employment situation is profound: results from the 1981-82 income survey show that the mean income for male full-year, full-time workers was $14,551 while that for female full-year full-time workers was $6,039 - or only 41.5% of male earnings (A.B.S. 1983c, Table 5).

(iv) Labour Market Training

The obvious conclusion to be drawn from the above discussion is that female single parents could be greatly assisted by labour market training programs. But in current programs this group is seriously under-represented. However, this was not always the case. In the early 1970s when unemployment in Australia was relatively low and labour market policy was centred on increasing labour supply, two training programs were introduced which were directly related to female single parents: one for widow pensioners and one for women restricted from employment by domestic responsibilities (Kirby, 1981). In June 1973, although only 2,135 people were enrolled in the total of 14 available training programs, 67.5% of them were enrolled in the program for women.

As the unemployment situation worsened in Australia, the government's approach to labour market programs changed. Kirby (1981) has called the mid 1970's in Australia a time of "burgeoning manpower programmes": between 1970-71 and 1975-76 Commonwealth expenditure on manpower programs increased from $1.5 million to $207.4 million. This increase in expenditure, however, did little to improve the training situation of women in general, including single parents. In 1973 a national apprenticeship scheme was introduced aimed at increasing demand for apprentices: traditional apprenticeship training schemes offer little assistance for women. A year later in 1974 the Regional Employment Development Scheme (REDS) was introduced, but at no time in REDS' one year operation did women constitute more than 6.2% of those employed. At its peak in July 1975 REDS assisted 16.2% of unemployed males and only 1.9% of unemployed females. In 1975-76 REDS accounted for 60% of expenditure on labour market programs and the apprenticeship scheme accounted for a further 17% (Kirby, 1981:4.35).

At this time the only training or employment scheme with a significant representation of women was the National Employment and Training Scheme (NEAT). NEAT was introduced in October 1974 and replaced 14 previous training programs. In 1975-76 it accounted for 19% of labour market program expenditure. Originally, it was largely an unrestricted program aimed at providing training and financial assistance to job seekers who lacked sufficient or appropriate skills. After the first year of operation however, NEAT was changed to a far more restricted scheme to assist those unemployed or at risk of losing employment, and to be eligible, applicants had to be registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service (Kirby, 1981). The change meant that a program which in its early stages had assisted a majority of women was now biased against them (Hiland, 1977).

Current labour market programs are aimed at the young unemployed and at apprenticeship training. As Table 13 shows, in 1980-81 over 90% of the people in labour market training in Australia were under 25 years. Schemes aimed at youth or apprentices do not generally assist females trying to re-enter the work force after an absence due to childrearing. In the same year, women aged 25 years or older received only 3% of training assistance yet accounted for nearly a quarter of the estimated longer-term unemployed and over one-fifth of the total unemployed. As pointed out by the Office of Status of Women (1983) in its background paper to the National Economic Summit, current training schemes contain no provision for pre-vocational or transitional training for adults. The schemes fail to meet the needs of women re-entering the workforce.

TABLE 13 in here

Even in the age-group where women are equally represented in training programs, the 15-19 year age-group, a Bureau of Labour Market Research Study (Hoy & Lampe, 1982) found that teenage females relied heavily on the lower-skilled programs with negligible access to the higher skilled pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational courses. Teenage males, however, were more favourably assisted than any other group in terms of both quantity and quality of employment assistance. These conclusions are supported by Table 14 which gives the percentage of males and females assisted in the different programs.

TABLE 14 in here

The Commonwealth Rebate for Apprentice Full-Time Training (CRAFT) program is not included in the age by sex breakdown given in Table 14. CRAFT is the most heavily funded training program (see Table 15) and together with other apprenticeship training programs currently accounts for over 40% of training program expenditure. However, it has been estimated that less than 7% of those assisted under trade training programs are females (Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, 1983:34).

The only training scheme potentially open to all unemployed single parents in which people over 25 years have a degree of representation is the General Training Assistance Program. But the percentage of expenditure committed to this program has decreased since 1978-79 from 10.9% to an estimated 2.0% in 1983-84 (see Table 15). General Training Assistance is granted to individuals for either on-the-job training or training in educational institutions. The on-the-job component is to be phased out this year and replaced with the Private Sector Assistance Program which will also replace SYETP (standard and extended) and the

Adult Wage Subsidy Scheme. The new scheme will provide subsidised training placements for the long-term unemployed. It is to be phased in during 1983-84 at a cost of $22 million to assist 38,200 persons. In a full-year it will provide training for up to 70,000 persons (1983-84 Budget Paper No.1:212). But this new scheme seems unlikely to improve the position of adults in training programs as its budget in a full-year, based on 1983-84 budget figures, will be only about 50% of the budgets for the programs it is replacing.

TABLE 15 in here

(v) Child Care

Another factor critical in determining the labour force participation of single parents is the number and ages of their children. Data presented in Table 16 indicate that the younger the age of their youngest child, the less likely are single parents to be employed, and if employed, to work full-time.

TABLE 16 in here

Where the youngest child is under school age (accounting for 30% of single parent families) one-third of parents are in the labour force, and of those employed, 67% are employed full-time. Where the youngest child is aged between 5 and 9 years, 44% of parents are in the labour force and of those employed, 66% are employed full-time. Where the youngest child is between 10 and 20 years (accounting for 43% of single parent families), 57% are in the labour force and of those employed, 71% are employed full-time (Table 16). The pattern is clear: the presence of a pre-school child in particular, and also of a primary school aged child inhibits the parent's labour force participation, however, when parents are employed (regardless of the age of their youngest child) they are much more likely to be employed full-time than part-time. This trend confirms our previous observations about the importance of full-time employment for single parents, particularly for those who must purchase day-care for their children. The costs associated with earning income, particularly when one parent is both breadwinner and home-maker and parent, clearly make full-time work (and hence adequate earnings) the most attractive alternative to full benefit. The combination of part-time work and partial benefit usually imposes high marginal rates of withdrawal of benefit (and loss of fringe benefits) as earned income rises.

It is clear that the presence of a young child in the family militates against any form of employment (only 26% of single parents with pre-school children are employed compared with 41% of single parents overall). This makes childcare provision a critical issue for single parents. The A.B.S. Child Care Survey (1981) found that only 18% of all pre-school children were in formal childcare programs (which included pre-school, child-care centres and family day-care programs). The 1975 Family Survey found that one-parent families with pre-school children were less likely than two-parent families to have at least one child attending formal childcare: 25% of single parents with pre-school children used formal childcare compared with 30% of two-parent families. Conversely, single parents were more likely than two-parent families to make use of informal childcare (i.e., care by a relative, friend or older children): 55% of single parents used informal childcare arrangements compared with 37% of two-parent families. However, the data do not indicate whether this care was daily care, or intermittent, occasional care. It is clear from the low labour force participation rates of single parents with pre-school children that in many instances informal childcare arrangements were not associated with parental employment. Asked for the main reasons why they were not using formal childcare provisions: 17% of single parents stated that such provisions were too expensive; 18% that there were no available centres with vacancies. In comparison, only 6% of two-parent families stated that costs were prohibitive and 12% that there were no available centres (A.B.S., 1980a:35). Without adequate provision of affordable childcare, a significant proportion of single parents (approximately 30%, i.e., those with pre-school children) have restricted opportunities for labour force participation.

(vi) Housing

The housing situation of most single parents is much less satisfactory than that of two-parent families. As Table 17 shows, single parents, especially female single parents, are far less likely to own or be buying their own home and far more likely to be paying a higher proportion of their weekly income in housing costs.

TABLE 17 in here

The housing situation of male single parents is closer to married couple families than to female single parents. The majority of male single parents (54%) and married couple families (71%) own or are buying their own house; the majority of female single parents (57%) are renting or boarding.

The housing situation of female single parents differs among sub-groups. The two key housing variables are firstly, owner-occupation (or not); and secondly, rental in the public or private sector. For female single parents home ownership varies according to marital status. Unpublished data from the 1975 Family Survey show that 63% of widows, 38% of divorced women, 24% of separated women but a very low 4% of never married female single parents were owning or purchasing their home. Table 18 indicates that those who own or are buying their own home were in a markedly better financial situation relative to housing costs than other groups.

TABLE 18 in here

Of owner/purchasers, three-quarter were paying less than 20% of their weekly income in housing costs; more than 50% of female single parents who were renting were paying above 20%. Female single parents who were boarding were also paying quite low accommodation costs relative to those who were renting, but only 11% of female single parents were in this situation whereas 45% were renting.

The 1975-76 A.B.S. Household Expenditure Survey showed that, of those who do rent, those in public housing are in a much better financial situation in terms of housing costs than those who rent on the private rental market. For households with one adult and children, those who were in public housing were paying only 50% of the rent of those in private rental accommodation (A.B.S., 1978: Table 2.2). It is not surprising that an increase in the percentage of single parent families applying for public housing has been reported. A report to the South Australian Housing Trust noted that one parent families were 13.2% of applications for state housing in the 12 months ending June 1973 and 19.5% for the 12 months ending June 1976 (quoted in Paris & Williams, 1983:21-22).

Again on this second key housing variable of public/private rental there is variation among female single parents. Of those who rented public housing, the 1975 Family Survey shows that they were more likely to be widowed and less likely to be never married and that they were more likely to be in the low to middle income range for female single parents than to be in the lowest income range.

Table 19 demonstrates the critical nature of housing for single parents, especially those with low incomes and no assets which constitutes a high proportion of never married single parents. This Table (derived from 1975-76 Household Expenditure Survey) shows that single parents in the lowest income groups (weekly household income under $140) were paying the highest proportion of their weekly income on housing costs. Household expenditure in this income group also exceeded income (indicating a high level of indebtedness). Households with a weekly income less than $200 were much more likely to be renting than were higher income households, and the incidence of rental declined as income rose above $200 per week.

TABLE 19 in here

There is a strong link between housing costs and poverty. The Commission of Inquiry into Poverty in Australia found that 41% of the very poor (after housing costs) rented in the private market. The sub-group of private renters with the highest incidence of poverty were single parent families: 46% of single parent families in private rental were very poor after housing costs compared with 13% of all private renters (Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1975a, and Carter, 1980).

The conclusions of the Poverty Commission were based on 1973-74 data. Ten years later the situation is likely to have worsened as the rent allowance for beneficiaries has by no means kept pace with the inflationary increases of rents in the private rental market, particularly in Sydney (Gilbert, 1982:38). A 1979 study of Melbourne rents found that single parents on income support would have had to pay at least 34% of their income on rent and possibly up to 58% for adequate private accommodation with a crowding criterion of no more than two persons per bedroom (Carter, 1980:108). This range for Melbourne rents would probably have typified all capital cities except Adelaide, which has generally lower rents, and Sydney, which has generally higher. Not surprisingly, a recent study found that single parent families in receipt of social security and in private rental accommodation are the highest users of Emergency Relief, indicating the inadequacy of their regular household income (Commonwealth/State Working Party on Emergency Relief and Income Security, 1983).

(vii) Fiscal Welfare: Tax Concessions for Single Parents

Single parents with children under 16, or children under 25 if full-time students, may claim the Sole Parent Rebate ($713 in 1982-83) if they have sole care of a dependent child and if the child's income is below $1,786 p.a.

Single parents on a widows' pension or supporting parents' benefit are eligible for a pension rebate if their taxable income is less than $6,343 (1982-83). The maximum rebate is $167 which reduces by 12.5 cents for each dollar of taxable income in excess of $5,007 and less than $6,343. Since this taxable income includes the single parent's widow's pension or supporting parent's benefit, the amount of extra income which can be earned which would qualify for a pension rebate would have to be less than $2,379.73 a year, or $45.76 a week.[2] To obtain the maximum pension rebate of $167 for 1982-83, a single parent would have to earn $1,043.73 a year or less, ($20.07 per week at the maximum).

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[2] For the 1982-83 fiscal year a single parent's taxable income from pension or benefit would have been $3,963.27; additional pension for children, guardian's allowance and supplementary assistance are not taxable.

Although the sole parent rebate recognises that taxpayers with sole responsibility for a dependent child have reduced capacity to pay tax, and this rebate therefore provides important tax savings, its redistributive effects are limited by the low labour force participation rates and employment rates of single parents, particularly female single parents.

(viii) Maintenance From the Former Spouse/Non-Custodial Parent

Recent statistics on maintenance are sparse. The available information shows a high rate of default under periodic maintenance orders after a relatively short time (New South Wales Law Reform Commission, 1983:117). A sample survey of approximately 530 sole parents on Class A widows' pension and supporting parent benefit (99% of the sample were women) carried out in 1980 found that 58% of the sample had taken action to secure maintenance payments from the former spouse, either through voluntary agreements or by application to the Courts (Jordan, 1982:8). It must be remembered that whereas all supporting parents may be legally entitled to child maintenance from the child's non-custodial parent, (under the terms of the Family Law Act for nuptial children and under the laws of the various States for ex-nuptial children), only separated and divorced former *de jure* wives are eligible for spouse maintenance. Separated *de-facto* partners and other never married mothers are not eligible for spouse maintenance from their child's father (New South Wales Law Reform Commission, 1983). Of the sample of pensioners and beneficiaries, 29% were receiving maintenance (the most common source of non-pension income), and the median weekly amount of maintenance was only $24. There was a tendency for maintenance, if continued at all, to be continued at the rate originally agreed upon several years before (i.e., rates of maintenance had not been indexed) (Jordan, 1982:10). The difference in the proportion of sole parent pensioners and beneficiaries who had taken action to secure maintenance (58%) and the proportion actually in receipt of maintenance (29%) suggests a low rate of compliance with maintenance orders.

Although the Family Law Act provides a uniform set of principles for determining maintenance entitlements for separated and divorced spouses of registered marriages, maintenance payments for ex-nuptial children are determined by State jurisdictions and the enforcement of all maintenance orders is dependent on different State arrangements. Two States, Western Australia and South Australia, have attempted to improve the organisation of maintenance enforcement. In Western Australia there is a public collector of maintenance for single parents on pensions or low incomes who cannot afford to use the legal system privately to enforce maintenance orders. In South Australia the Department of Community Welfare will assist in legal action against maintenance defaulters and also collect the payments on the parent's behalf. The South Australian service is provided for all single parents. (Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1975b)

The outcome of the Australian maintenance system is that many children whose parents do not share a common residence and whose non-custodial parent is either unwilling or unable to pay maintenance are disadvantaged, relative to children who live with both parents or whose non-custodial parent does pay maintenance. Recent legislative developments in New Zealand use what is virtually the tax system to administer the transfer of maintenance payments from the "liable parent" to the custodial parent when the custodial parent is in receipt of social security payments (Jordan, 1982:139). Critics of the United States' maintenance enforcement system (Watts, Jakubson and Skidmore, 1979; Weitzmann, 1981) have pointed out that the non-enforcement of maintenance obligations (and the privatised modes of enforcement) result in considerable inequities between the economic status of the custodial parent and children, and the economic status of the non-custodial parent.

Under Sections 62(3) and 83AAD of the Social Security Act, claimants for widows' pension and supporting parents' benefit are required to satisfy the Director General that they have taken reasonable action to secure maintenance payments from the non-custodial parent. The provisions have not been enforced since the introduction of the Family Law Act (1976) and a recent directive (in April 1983) of the Minister for Social Security confirmed that it is current government policy to continue not to enforce the condition.

One argument in favour of the requirement is that non-custodial parents should not be able to escape the obligation to support their children. However, as was pointed out by the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty (1975b:187-8), this argument ignores the fact that the parent is able to escape the obligation if the custodial parent does not apply for social security benefit. Even more pertinently, the requirement, as it is stated in the Act, places the onus for securing maintenance on the custodial parent - while few Australian States have devised a routinised, collective method for transferral of maintenance payments. Since the Family Law Act and various States' Acts have codified the obligations of both parents to support their children, it would appear anomalous that in what appears to be a majority of instances it is the custodial parent only who bears the responsibility. It has been pointed out by several commentators (Evatt, 1983; Jordan, 1983; Hambly, 1983) that maintenance payments are unlikely ever to represent a substantial component of income support for single parent families (social security and labour force participation providing much more secure and substantial sources of income). Nevertheless, these commentators also stressed the need for a centralised collection and distribution agency for maintenance payments.

(ix) Conclusions

Of the three major sources of income support for single parent families (paid employment, government income maintenance and maintenance from the non-custodial parent), there has been an increase in the proportion of single parent families dependent on income maintenance in the period 1974 to 1982. This trend has occurred in a period of recession and high levels of unemployment which have had a strong dampening effect on single parents' labour force participation. These processes have reduced single parents' opportunities for both full-time employment and for part-time employment which supplements pension and benefit with sufficient earnings to offset the disincentives of the high effective marginal tax rates which are imposed on extra earnings. For women in particular, the relative scarcity of full-time jobs has reduced the opportunity for full-time employment which represents the most viable option to full benefit: because it is full-time employment which provides the most adequate and secure form of remuneration.

Since social security payments are essential in providing income support for custodial parents and their children, attention must be given to the deterioration of the value of their income maintenance payments (in relation to average weekly earnings and in relation to the payments received by other pensioners and beneficiaries without children). As a result of this deterioration, and of the labour market disadvantages experienced by single parents, the proportion of single parents in poverty in 1978-79 was more than three times higher than the proportion in poverty of any other adult income unit (S.W.P.S., 1981). It is the non-indexation of the child components of pension and benefit (guardian's allowance, children's allowance and family allowances) which requires urgent attention.

However, long-term dependence on benefit and reduced opportunities for paid employment (either through the operation of the extra earnings test or through job scarcity) may erode single parents' job skills, make qualifications obsolete, and erode the confidence necessary for labour market participation. Disincentives to paid labour operate not only directly through the imposition of the extra earnings test, but operate in a more generally pervasive way through the creation of insecurity and uncertainty about sources and adequacy of income (Jordan, 1982:84-6). The partial loss of benefit upon gaining a part-time job (which may be casual and insecure) may present a supporting parent with great uncertainty about the security of regular, known income to meet her family's needs. A further, pervasive disincentive to women's labour force participation exists at the ideological level: in the sex-based division of labour in the household which prescribes and legitimates mother's dependency, both in a couple relationship and when the relationship ends. The extent of the differential between male and female single parents' dependence on government income support (19% of men compared with 84% of women) is testimony to the strength of this ideology.

However, there are other more direct disincentives to single parents' employment. It would appear that full-time employment (which is more likely to provide adequate secure earnings) represents a more viable option for at least two-thirds of single parents who are employed (regardless of the age of their youngest child). The data analysed in this paper show that one of the major determinants of women single parents' employment, and in particular their full-time employment, is their educational level and post-school qualifications. On a generous estimate, only one-quarter of female single parents (in 1975) had post-school qualifications. Since the onset of high levels of unemployment, training programs supported by direct Commonwealth expenditure have concentrated on youth, providing the most sustained, subsidised training for young men in the skilled trades. Adults, and particularly women, over the age of 24 have been seriously under-represented in training programs.

In addition, the labour force participation rates of single parents are affected by the age of their youngest child. The opportunities for the employment of parents with pre-school children is further constrained by the scarcity of affordable formal childcare provision.

It would appear therefore that the combination of public policies and labour market processes in Australia in the period under review has eroded the opportunities for single parents' paid employment and has also eroded the value of their social security payments by the failure to index those components of the payment which are directly related to the presence of children. Finally, the lack of a centralised agency for the collection and distribution of maintenance payments has allowed the enforcement of maintenance payments from the non-custodial parent to remain, in most Australian States, a private responsibility of the custodial parent.

(II) SINGLE PARENT FAMILIES IN SWEDEN: INCIDENCE, MAJOR SOURCES OF INCOME SUPPORT AMD OTHER SOCIAL POLICIES

(i) Incidence of Single Parent Families

A relatively high proportion of families with children under 18 in Sweden are single parent families. In 1979 it was estimated that 27% of families in Sweden were single parent families, which is about double the percentage in Australia (Kamerman & Kahn, 1982:368). Scott (1982:80) reports that 92% of Swedish single parent families are headed by women. In Sweden, in comparison with Australia, a much higher proportion of single parents has never been married. The estimated distribution of single mothers by marital status in 1968 was: 15% widowed; 29% divorced; 16% separated; and 40% never married (Cockburn & Heclo, 1975:5). Since Sweden has a very high rate of de-facto cohabitation (15% of all couples in the late 1970's) (Trost, 1979) it is likely that a large proportion of never-married single parents would be ex-de-facto partners.

(ii) Social Security and Transfers to Children

There are three types of social security provision which are relevant to the single parent in Sweden: social insurance, social assistance and child allowance.[3]

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[3] Unless otherwise stated, information about Sweden is taken from the series of leaflets produced by the Swedish Institute - "Fact Sheets on Sweden".

(a) Social Insurance: All Swedish citizens are insured under the National Insurance Act. Social insurance includes health, dental and parental insurance; sickness benefits; partial, basic and supplementary pensions; compulsory work injuries insurance and voluntary unemployment insurance. Only benefits which are particularly relevant to the single parent are discussed here.

The parental insurance scheme provides benefits in a number of different situations in connection with children. Firstly, benefits are provided for 6 months surrounding the birth of a child. A woman can cease employment one month before she expects to give birth and receive parental benefit. Once the child is born the parents can share the 6 months' leave between them. They cannot both receive the benefit at the same time, except that fathers are entitled to 10 days' leave of absence with parental benefit after the birth of the child, even if the mother is also receiving parental benefit. The benefit is 90% of the parent's gross income with a daily guaranteed minimum benefit (SEK 37 in 1981[4]) for all parents on leave regardless of employment status.

A further 6 months of parental leave are available and may be taken at any time during the child's first eight years (Swedish children begin school at 7 years of age). For half of these 6 months the benefit is paid at the 90% of income rate but for the other 3 months only the guaranteed minimum is paid. Although 80% of women using the parental benefit return to work within a year of childbirth (Kamerman & Kahn, 1981:49), an employee is legally entitled to take unpaid leave of absence to care for his or her child until the child is 18 months old, during which time his or her job and seniority are protected. Either or both parents are also entitled to shorten the working day to six hours until the child's 8th birthday.

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[4] SEK = Swedish krona; in 1981 the average gross income for a male industrial worker was about SEK 77,000 p.a. - net income would be about SEK 47,000.

Parental benefit is also available under other circumstances to parents with children under 12. Families are entitled to 60 days a year leave for each child if a parent is unable to work because the child is ill, if the person who usually looks after the child is ill, or if the parent wants to visit the day care centre or take the child to a child welfare clinic. It is illegal for an employer to refuse parental leave under the stipulated conditions.

The Swedish conditions for parental leave are markedly different from the Australian. In March 1979 the Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission granted a minimum of six weeks compulsory unpaid maternity leave for all female employees under Federal awards, plus optional leave of up to 12 months, including the compulsory period. The flow-on to State awards means that all women working full or part-time are eligible for unpaid maternity leave and are also protected from dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or because they are on maternity leave. There are no leave provisions for fathers nor is parental leave to care for sick children recognised.

A survey was conducted in 1981 in Sweden to assess how the parental scheme was being used by fathers (Trost, 1983). Over three-quarters of men surveyed whose partners had given birth in the previous year had taken leave around the time of birth (88% of those aged 25-29 years had taken leave). Only one-third of men with children under 12 had taken parental leave to care for a sick child during the previous year (although the survey included some fathers who had a wife at home full-time and some whose children were not sick in the previous year).

Again, the percentage taking leave increased in the younger age group of men.

Government policies cannot force changes in societal attitudes to women's domestic labour and childcare responsibilities nor ensure a more equal sex-based division of that labour. But the Swedish policies do provide conditions in which changes are possible. The most recent figures available show that in 1978 between 12% and 14% of fathers eligible took parental leave in the first six months of a child's birth (not including leave around the birth of a child): in 1974, the first year of parental leave, only 2% of fathers took the leave (Kamerman and Kahn, 1981:48).

As part of social insurance, widows and their children in Sweden receive benefits under the national pension scheme. This is a dual system which covers the basic pension and supplementary pension (ATP). Basic pension benefits are related to a "base amount" which is fixed annually according to the general price level. In September 1981 the base amount was SEK 17,300. Basic pensions are independent of means tests and include old-age pensions, disability, widow's and children's pensions. A widow's pension is payable to a widow if she has the custody of a child under 16, or if she has reached 36 years of age and been married 5 years. The pension is 95% of the base amount and ceases on re-marriage. A pensioner who draws only the basic pension also receives a municipal housing subsidy and pension supplement. The housing subsidy is tax exempt. It varies from region to region but is increasingly designed to correspond with actual housing costs. The pension supplement is 45% of the base amount. Pensioners with children also receive a children's supplement for a child under 16 years of 25% of the base amount. This supplement can be reduced if the pensioner receives ATP.

A children's pension is payable under the basic pension scheme to any child under 18 years on the death of one or both parents. Usually a child receives a pension of at least 40% of the base amount or 60% if both parents are deceased.

The National Supplementary Pension (ATP) is an earnings-related scheme. A person who has earned income in excess of the base amount for at least 3 years receives earnings-related benefits in addition to the basic pension. It was estimated in 1980 that 90% of males and 76% of females of working age had ATP credit (Eriksen, 1981:418). Since then, in 1982, a new provision has come into force that allows parents with children under 3 years to count the years that they stayed at home to care for their children as ATP years, which should eventually increase the percentage of females credited (International Social Security Review, 1982:232).

A widow's pension is available from ATP if the deceased husband had been vested with pension rights under ATP. The widow would receive 35% of the husband's estimated pension and each child would be entitled to a children's pension. Together, a basic and ATP pension would amount to about two-thirds of an average income. A widower does not receive a pension unless his wife was recognised as the principal earner or unless he is disabled or unfit for work. The children would still receive the child's pension from the basic pension scheme, and from the ATP if their mother was credited.

The Swedish Pension Committee has recently presented a report on survivor pensions (pensions for widows and their children) which proposed an extensive reform of the pension (International Social Security Review, 1982:232-3). The report recommended that the survivor benefits be made consistent with changes in Swedish families which had taken place since they were introduced. Widows' pensions in their present form would be abolished and child's pensions improved. A surviving spouse would receive some type of rehabilitation grant for a limited period to enable him or her to adapt to the new situation. If there are children under 8 years, the rehabilitation grant would be paid until the youngest child reached 8 years, otherwise it would be paid for about a year. The grant would be means tested. A long transitional period was recommended so that women who had reached 45 years when the new legislation came into force would be entitled to widows' pensions under the old legislation.

The present system of survivor's benefits in Sweden is discriminatory since most men would not be eligible for a pension if their wife died. It is interesting that the Swedish Pension Committee, to correct this anomaly, has recommended not to extend the pension to men, but to restrict the access of both sexes to the pension on equal grounds. At the same time, the Committee has advised an increase in pensions for children in recognition of their greater needs and dependency. Australia faced a similar situation over supporting parents' benefits. The supporting mothers' benefit, which was introduced in 1973, was payable only to women until the Australian government chose to correct this anomaly by extending the benefit to men in 1977. This enabled supporting fathers to gain access to a benefit which took more account of the presence of children than did the benefits (unemployment, sickness, special) to which they were previously entitled.

(b) Social Assistance: Social assistance in Sweden is largely a residual program offering short-term, means-tested aid to those in emergency situations, including low-income earners in full-time work. (Heidenheimer et al., 1975:209-210).

A study of recipients of social assistance between 1945 and 1972 found that about 20% of single parents had sought assistance annually since the 1960's. This rate was three to six times as high as the rate among married couples with children (Korpi, 1976:137-8). In addition, the average length of time for which a female single parent was in receipt of social assistance was longer: 4.5 months compared with 3.8 months for all recipients (Greve, 1978:12).

Social assistance is administered by local municipalities which set the level of assistance. In Stockholm in December 1978, a single parent with two children, one aged 5 and one aged 10 years (assistance increases with the age of the child), received 165% of the base pension amount which came to SEK 1,735 a month (Agell, 1979:176). Social assistance, being means-tested, is subjected to very high rates of withdrawal (Husby and Wetzel, 1977).

In some respects Australia's system of emergency relief administered by the States is similar to Sweden's social assistance. Certainly, as with social assistance, single parents have a disproportionate rate of receipt of emergency relief. In N.S.W. in 1982, 16.0% of people on supporting parents'benefit were granted emergency relief, with each beneficiary receiving on average a grant on four occasions. In comparison, of those on unemployment benefit, 8.8% received emergency assistance with an average time of assistance granted per person of 2.5. Supporting parent beneficiaries was the group most likely to receive emergency cash assistance in N.S.W. in 1982. Similarly, data from Victorian and South Australian emergency relief programs show that supporting parent beneficiaries also had the highest rate of relief receipt in those States in 1982. (Commonwealth/State Working Party on Emergency Relief, 1983.)

(c) Child Allowances: In Sweden child allowances are universal, flat-rate, tax-free cash benefits paid to the mother or single parent for each child under 16 years. The amount in October 1980 was SEK 3,000 per year, about 6% of the net average wage, for each child. For each child over 16 years attending secondary school, there is an allowance of SEK 2,300 for 9 months which may be increased by an income-tested supplement. The child allowances are set as a proportion of the national insurance base amount which is indexed to general price levels and raised annually (Cockburn and Heclo, 1975:16). In 1976 Australian family allowances for two children would have increased a family's income by 6% of the net average unmarried production worker's wage; in Sweden the family's income would have increased by 11% with child allowances for two children (OECD, 1978).

(iii) Employment Status

Sweden among the OECD countries has the highest labour force participation rate for women. By the end of the 1970s, 74% of women aged 20 to 64 were in paid employment, although many women, particularly married women, work part-time. High Swedish marginal tax rates make full-time work for married women, especially if they have children, less attractive. In 1977, 11% of women in the labour force worked between 1 and 19 hours per week, 33% worked between 20 and 34 hours a week and 56% worked full-time or 35 hours or more a week. The labour force participation rate for women with children under 7 years is not markedly lower than for women generally - 69% in 1978, of whom 85% worked 20 hours or more a week (Current Sweden, 1980). According to Kamerman and Kahn (1981:368) 86% of single mothers are in the labour force and of the 14% who are not, a considerable proportion are in educational or training programs.

Although a higher proportion of women are in paid employment in Sweden then in other OECD countries, nevertheless they are still employed in a traditionally sex-segmented labour market. Women are concentrated in a relatively small number of traditionally female occupations - 52% of women are employed in public administration and other service industries (*Current Sweden*, 1980:6). This occupational division is reflected in women's wages. There has been a narrowing of the gap between women's and men's wages in recent years in Sweden, reflecting in part the official government policy of equal pay and the trade unions' "wages solidarity policy" which aimed to narrow pay differentials between the lowest and highest wage earners and hence benefitted women more than men. For industrial workers, in 1960 women's average hourly earnings were 69% of men's; in 1970 they were 80%; and in 1980 they were 89% (*Current Sweden*, 1980:9, and information from the Swedish Institute). These are average figures, however, and like all averages conceal considerable differences between the actual earnings of individual men and women (Scott, 1982:24). They also represent hourly earnings for workers on the same level of employment and men and women are unlikely to be on the same level (McCrea, 1977:391-2). In 1977 when women's hourly earnings were 87% of men's in industry, women's monthly full-time earnings in industry were only 70% of men's, reflecting differences in occupations and levels of employment (*Current Sweden*, 1980:9).

(iv) Labour Market Training

Swedish labour market policy places strong emphasis on training programs for adults. Labour market training is available for the unemployed, people wishing to return to the labour force, people at risk of losing their jobs, and people difficult to place in jobs because they lack occupational skills. There is also a "bottleneck training" scheme for which a person may register without being unemployed or in danger of losing a job. The aim is to increase the supply of skilled people in important fields where there is a shortage of skilled labour. Enrolment priority for these courses, which have recently been expanded, goes to workers who have a weak position in the labour market or who are low paid. This is of special assistance to women who account for a high proportion of such workers (OECD, 1979:61).

Labour market training is free of charge and participants (who must be aged 20 or over) receive a training grant ranging from SEK 155 to SEK 210 a day. This compares with an average daily income of about SEK 300 for industrial workers in 1980. Single parents are exempt from the minimum age requirement and if they require child care during training the children's supplement included in the daily allowance is increased by 250 per cent. Labour market training in Sweden is therefore different from current Australian programs. Most significantly, participants must have reached 20 years of age before they are eligible for training (single parents are exempt from this age requirement) whereas in Australia people under 20 years accounted for 71% of those assisted in training programs in 1980-81 (see Table 13). This difference is related to the Swedish secondary school system. About 85% of 16 year olds in Sweden advance to upper secondary school. This is compared with 59% of Australian youth aged 16 at school in 1979 and 32% of youth aged 17 (A.B.S., 1980b:81). The Swedish secondary school also allows for later re-entry of early school leavers. Municipal authorities are required to follow up for at least two years early school-leavers in an attempt to ensure they are engaged in study, training and/or work. These provisions enable labour market training to be focused on programs for adults. In recent years women have represented more then 50% of participants in such programs.

Swedish labour market policy emphasises retraining and job creation in preference to unemployment benefits. In 1979-80 expenditure on labour market training and employment programs accounted for 5.3% of Sweden's national budget outlays compared with the Australian figure of 0.3% (information from the Swedish Institute and Commonwealth of Australia 1980-81 Budget Paper No.1). The comparison between expenditures is even more marked considering that 71% of those assisted by Australian training measures are under 20 years of age whereas in Sweden this population would be assisted by the education system. In early 1983 Sweden's unemployment rate was slightly over 3% compared with the Australian rate of just over 10% (A.B.S., 1983d).

(v) Childcare

There is insufficient childcare available in Sweden to meet the demand and preference is given to single and low-income parents. Children do not begin compulsory school until 7 years of age, although since 1975 municipalities have been required to provide a pre-school place for all six year olds for at least 3 hours a day.

Childcare programs are a municipal responsibility. They include public child care centres, and publically and privately arranged family day care. Also, there are leisure-time centres available for children after school and during school vacations attached to some local schools. It has been estimated that in 1978, 32% of children aged 0-6 were in full-time childcare programs and a further 15% were in part-time care; 30% of all children under 3 were in childcare and 55% of children aged 3-6 years (Kamerman and Kahn, 1981:101-102). Of these children 89% were in public childcare. Only 8% of school children aged between 7 and 12 were in after-school programs in 1977. The Swedish figures lag far behind childcare coverage in certain other European countries; for example, in 1975 in France, 95% of children aged between 3 and 6 years were in childcare programs as were 31% of children under 3 (Kamerman and Kahn, 1981:209).

Public childcare is available from 6.30 a.m. to 7.00 p.m. and a condition of government subsidy of daycare nurseries is that they open for at least 7 hours per day. The programs are financed through tax revenues, parents' fees and an employer pay-roll fee earmarked for childcare. Industry's share in the financing of childcare has increased recently in response to the argument that since industry profits most directly from increased female labour force participation it should contribute more than it has done to the provision of childcare which enables women to be employed (OECD, 1979:144). Parents' fees are scaled according to income. Single parents with children under 16 who are employed and one of two working spouses are entitled to a tax deduction in recognition of the extra costs for care of children incurred by working outside the home (Agell, 1979:168-9).

(vi) Housing

Public sector housing is not a stigmatised, marginal section of Swedish housing: it accounts for 25% of all dwellings and about half of all rented dwellings. (In Australia public sector housing accounted for 4.4% of all household occupancy in 1978 and 18% of all rentals (A.B.S., 1980b:229)). Of the other 50% of rented dwellings, a little over 20% is owned by tenant-owner associations. These associations are non-profit making and lease flats to members. Private rental accounts for 20% of all dwellings and 40% of dwellings are owner-occupied.

Approximately one-third of all families with children in 1981 received a housing supplement, determined by income and number of dependent children. The full housing supplement covers about 50% of rental costs. Families with annual incomes up to SEK 35,000 were entitled to the full benefit which was reduced by 15% for families with incomes between SEK 35,000 and SEK 54,000 and by 24% for families with incomes above this level. The supplement was discontinued when household income reached SEK 90,000.

According to Kamerman (1980:88) there is evidence which suggests that the housing allowance acts as a disincentive to married women's employment where the husband is employed and earning average or better than average wages. Such a disincentive applies much less to single mothers because the income ceiling is set at a level which enables most employed single mothers to be eligible for the subsidy, taking into account the generally lower level of women's wages.

(vii) Fiscal Welfare

Single parents with children under 16 years in Sweden who are employed (and one of two working spouses) are entitled to the gainful employment tax deduction in recognition of the extra expenses for care of children incurred by working outside the home. A deduction from earned income (up to SEK 2,000) is made before computing tax liability. In addition, single parents with children under 18 years are eligible for a tax rebate of SEK 1,800 per year from their tax liability (Agell, 1979:167-170).

(viii) Maintenance From the Former Spouse/Non-Custodial Parent

In Sweden maintenance for a spouse following divorce has become less frequent over the past decade. When granted it has been regarded as a temporary payment to enable the spouse to retrain or find a job, or until the children are of school-age. In 1970 spouse maintenance was granted in only one divorce in ten and in every second case the support was for a limited time and the obligation to pay the allowance had ceased by 1975 (Agell, 1979:159).

However, both parents, depending on their financial capacity, are obliged to support their children following a divorce. The same obligation applies to ex-nuptial children. If the non-custodial parent fails to pay the set maintenance, the government guarantees the child an "advance maintenance" which is 40% of the base amount used in social insurance estimates. The government, rather than the other parent, then takes steps to recover the maintenance. In 1980 each child whose parents were unmarried, divorced or separated and who lived with only one parent was guaranteed a sum of SEK 5,960 a year.

Since a 1978 reform of the maintenance legislation, effort has been made to give more clear guide-lines for the calculation of maintenance (Agell, 1978). Parents are obliged to support their children according to what is reasonable, taking into account the needs of the child and the economic circumstances of each parent. The child is entitled to the same standard as represented by the average of the parents' economic situations. The provision starts with a set formula linked to the costs of a child's basic needs of food, clothes, etc., set at 60% of the base social security rate. This payment is apportioned to the parents according to their available income and ability to pay. If the non-custodial parent, because of lack of income or other commitments, has his/her maintenance liability set at lower than 40% of the base amount, the Government pays a supplementary allowance up to this 40%.

Maintenance is paid monthly in advance. Although it is not taxed as income, it is treated as a tax deduction from the income of the non-custodial parent to a maximum of SEK 3,000 per child a year (1978 figure).

(ix) Conclusions

It would be inappropriate to draw strong conclusions about the economic status of single parent families in relation to two parent families in Sweden based on this survey of the translated literature and statistics available to us. Clearly, there are gaps in the data for Sweden and we have knowledge and understanding of the status of women in the work force in Australia and of the Australian poverty literature which make us more sensitive to the actual situation of single parent families in relation to other income units. Our "outsiders'" knowledge of Sweden is of a different order to our "insiders'" knowledge of Australian conditions.

However, what this comparative case study provides is an indication of alternative policies and their underlying assumptions which have been devised to ensure a minimum level of income support for single parent families. The characteristics of Swedish single parent family policy are clear: firstly, incentives to the custodial parent's labour force participation; through legislative recognition of employees' needs as parents, adult training and retraining schemes; tax concessions for childcare costs, minimisation of social security payment for the widowed parent (as yet this remains an official recommendation), and the focussing of spouse maintenance on providing a short period of rehabilitative training. Although women as single parents confront a sex-segmented labour market and unequal access to earnings (in comparison with male employees) in Sweden as in other advanced industrial countries, they nevertheless inherit a tradition of much higher labour force participation rates for women than prevail in any of the other OECD countries (except Denmark). The inadequacy of childcare provision however would clearly constitute a barrier to women's employment opportunities when there is a pre-school child in the family.

The Swedish social security system has placed greater emphasis on child support in relation to support of the custodial parent, than has the Australian system. The component for children in the pension system and the universal child allowance are indexed, and the equivalences for children implicit in the pension and child support scales are more generous than the corresponding Australian equivalences (using the work of Whiteford (1983) as a guide). Recent recommendations of the Swedish Pension Committee have moved further towards concentrating government income support for single parent families on the child, and reducing support specifically for widows to an initial rehabilitative period to enable the parent to re-enter paid employment. A much greater emphasis in Sweden on housing assistance, both through provision of a means-tested supplement to subsidise rental costs and through provision of public housing, provides income assistance for the single parent in employment, which is of particular importance for low paid women.

Similar priorities regulate the payment of maintenance from a former spouse and non-custodial parent to the custodial parent and children. Maintenance for the spouse has been minimised to rehabilitative maintenance for a short period and maintenance payments for children have been regularised by the adoption of a formula which takes account of the costs of child-rearing, by the provision of an indexed government maintenance guarantee and government responsibility for collection and distribution.

(III) Comparison Between Economic Situation of Single Parent Families in Australia and Sweden

A study conducted by Kamerman and Kahn in 1979 (published 1982) assessed the effect of taxation and income transfer systems in different countries on the economic situation of families with young children. Sweden and Australia were included in the eight countries surveyed. The study compared the end of year income (gross income minus tax liability) of different types of families and the income transfers and tax treatments used to respond to the extra costs of families with children. The income transfer programs which were included in the study and which are relevant to this discussion are family (child) allowances, housing allowances, social assistance (or social security payments) and maintenance. The three core elements in statutory provision - social insurance, social assistance and taxation were covered.

The economic well being of the different family types was compared by using the net average production worker's wage (APWW) in each country as a common index for all family types. This allowed for comparisons to be made of the effects of tax/transfer treatments on different family types in each country in relation to the net wage of the average production worker. Net APWW is averaged gross wage for an unmarried male worker with no dependents in manufacturing industry minus national and local personal income taxes and employee's social security contributions. In this analysis, a score of 100 means that a family yearly net income (benefits plus salary, if any) is exactly equal to that of the net APWW for that country. A score of 75 means the income is 75% of net APWW.

The study compared a number of different types of families. We have abstracted the results for the following family types:

1. Female sole parent, not in the labour force, with children aged 2 and 7.
2. Female sole parent, employed at half APWW, with children aged 2 and 7.
3. Female sole parent, employed at half APWW, with children aged 2 and 7, father contributes in maintenance amount equal to double the amount paid for child allowance for one child for one year.
4. Two parents, one earner at APWW, two children aged 2 and 7.
5. Two parents, two earners - one at APWW and one at half APWW, two children aged 2 and 7.
6. Married couple, one earner at APWW, no children.

All the families were assumed to have no income other than their earnings and to be occupying average rented housing. The results for the six family situations are given in Table 20.

TABLE 20 in here

Table 20 demonstrates the effects of the different tax/transfer systems in Australia and Sweden on families with children. In the first case: a female sole parent not in the work force, with two children, yearly net income in Sweden is 94% of net APWW. This income consists of universal child allowances, advance maintenance for the children, a housing subsidy and social assistance (a rough estimate is that the social assistance, or welfare, component of this is between about 40 and 60%). If the single parent was a widow, she would receive a widow's pension, the children would receive children's pensions, and the family would also get housing subsidy and child allowances. A widow's situation would be better than that of other single parents - well over 100% APWW.

The financial treatment of a similar family in Australia is relatively less generous: representing 50% of APWW. This income consists of family allowances, supplementary assistance (rent allowance), and supporting parents benefit or widows pension (which includes additional pension for children and guardian's allowance). In this case the welfare component of the income would be about 90% as the only non-welfare item is family allowances.

In the second case where the single parent is employed and earns half APWW: in Australia her income is 79% APWW and in Sweden it is 123%. The Australian single parent would have lost her supplementary assistance but would retain about 40% of her pension, and also would continue to receive family allowances. She would also receive the sole parent rebate on her tax. The Swedish single parent would have lost social assistance but retained child allowances, advance maintenance and the housing subsidy. Also, the employed single parent in Sweden would receive a tax deduction for childcare expenses and all single parents receive a tax reduction similar to the Australian sole parent rebate in recognition of the higher costs they must meet for their children as sole parents. It is interesting that the Australian single parent who is employed at half APWW has gained more relative to the single parent who is not employed than is the case in Sweden. However, her economic position relative to the Swedish single parent continues to lag far behind.

Only in Australia does the single parent gain more in the third case where, as well as earning half APWW, she also receives maintenance. This is because all children in Sweden whose parents do not live together are eligible for advance maintenance whether or not the non-residential parent actually pays the maintenance.

A two parent family in Australia where one earns APWW would receive family allowances and a dependent spouse rebate. In this fourth case the family's yearly net income would be 107% of APWW compared with 133% in Sweden. The Swedish family receive child allowances and a housing subsidy. The family also receives a tax rebate for the non-earning spouse but this is being phased out.

In the fifth case where both parents are employed and one earns APWW and the other half APWW: in Sweden this family receives child allowances and a tax deduction for childcare expenses but loses the housing subsidy and the tax rebate for the dependent spouse. Similarly, in Australia the family would lose the tax rebate but retain family allowances. The Australian family has gained more relative to the family with only one parent earning APWW than in the Swedish case, most likely because the Swedish family has lost the housing subsidy.

The final case of the married couple with no children and one earning APWW is interesting as a comparison. In both countries this family receives a tax rebate for the dependent spouse in addition to earnings. In Sweden the only family situation which is below this one is that of a sole parent not in the work force, whose situation is 10% below that of the couple on APWW. All other family situations are substantially above. A significant comparison is that between the married couple family earning APWW and the two parent family with two children also earning APWW. In Sweden the family with children receives through the tax/transfer system 30% more than the married couple; in Australia the family with children receives only 5% more. In Australia all the single parent family situations analysed fall below that of the married couple family with no children. For a single parent out of the work force (which is the predominant situation for female headed single parent families) yearly income was only 53% of that of the average production worker's wage.

Since the Kamerman and Kahn study, the Australian government introduced in October 1982 a new cash transfer scheme for low income families - Family Income Supplement (FIS). FIS was introduced to provide assistance for low income families with children not in receipt of a pension or benefit. It was announced in the 1983-84 budget that in November 1983 FIS would be increased to $12 a week for each child for a family with an income up to $199 per week with additional income of $24 for each child before FIS ceases. FIS would not benefit any of the family situations analysed since the single parents receive some pension or benefit and the married couple family with two children has an income of APWW which is in excess of the FIS limit. Single parents at half average weekly male earnings would not derive greater financial benefit from FIS than they would from combining income and partial benefit (see the Appendix). A married couple family with two children would need to have a family income of about 57% of average male weekly earnings to obtain the full FIS of $24, and up to about 70% to obtain any FIS.[5]

One point which is clear from Table 20 is that the financial rewards for a single parent who is employed in Australia are considerably greater than those for a single parent in Sweden. A single parent in Australia who earns an income of half APWW has increased her end of year income by 58% relative to that obtained through the social security system if she is not employed. A Swedish single parent in the same situation will increase her income by 31%. It would appear that the Australian single parent has greater financial incentive to be employed.

What therefore requires explanation is: why in Australia are only 35% of female single parents employed compared with approximately 86% in Sweden? Sweden appears to have achieved the situation (long held in Anglo-Saxon welfare literature to create unacceptable work disincentives) of generous levels of income security combined with high labour force participation rates. The explanation lies not in the analysis of isolated policies but in the combination of policies related to the recognition of the parental responsibilities of employees (both male and female); labour market training policies for adults; income transfers concentrated on the needs of children; trade union efforts to raise the wages of low paid workers; universal housing assistance for females with children; state regulated maintenance policies to protect the financial situation of children who are not living with both parents.

Swedish single parent family policy appears to be based on three major guidelines: firstly, the right of children to economic

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[5] This is based on the seasonally adjusted average weekly earnings for males for the June quarter 1983 of $347.30.

security through indexed universal child allowances and a housing subsidy based on family income and the presence of dependent children; an indexed and relatively generous child component in the social security system; state regulation and guarantee of child maintenance payments from the non-custodial to the custodial parent. Secondly, Swedish labour market policy encourages universal adult participation by recognising the parental responsibilities of employees and by providing adult training and retraining. However, as in other OECD countries, women continue to confront a sex-segmented labour market, lower pay and higher rates of part-time employment compared with men, which makes child allowances, the housing allowance and retraining programs particularly valuable for the female single parent. Thirdly, both social security and spouse maintenance policies are increasingly based on the assumption that a period of rehabilitation is required in order to assist the widowed or custodial parent to achieve financial independence as a labour force participant. The lack of adequate provision for childcare, and the continuing over-representation of single parents among those requiring extra financial assistance from the residual social assistance program, both suggest that a proportion of single parents in Sweden continue to face constraints to their labour force participation and continue to be located in the lower ranges of the income distribution. However, the Table comparing the tax/transfer treatment of single parent families with two parent families in Australia and Sweden shows that Swedish public policies have been relatively more successful in redistributing income to single parents with children (and to all families with children) than have Australian public policies.

Labour market changes and public policies in Australia in the period 1974 to 1982 have resulted in decreased labour force participation rates for single parents and their increased dependence on government income maintenance. Australian labour market policies provide little beneficial recognition of the parental responsibilities of employees, and provide little expenditure on training and retraining for adults who are seeking to re-enter the workforce after a period of unemployment or childcare responsibilities. The scarcity of childcare provision places further constraints on the labour force participation of single parents with pre-school children. Examination of the social security data shows that it is female headed single parent families in particular who are disadvantaged by these processes since they constitute 90% of single parent families but 96% of all single parent families receiving government income support. Within the social security system emphasis is placed on categorical support for the custodial parent, and relatively less emphasis is placed on maintaining levels of income support for dependent children, resulting in the non-indexation of the various child-related components of pensions and benefits and the non-indexation of the universal family allowance payment. As a result, the value of total income support for single parent families on pension or benefit in relation to the OECD standard (the average production worker's wage) falls considerably short of the corresponding Swedish equivalent. Indeed, redistribution to all families with children through the tax/transfer system in Australia falls short of child-related redistribution in Sweden. This is a consequence not only of the non-indexation of transfers for children, but also of the absence of a comprehensive housing policy.

Finally, in Australia, as in Sweden, family law has moved away from the principle of long-term spouse maintenance to an approach which emphasises the need for the ex-partners to attain or regain financial independence, i.e., towards the concept of financial "rehabilitation". However, Commonwealth and State laws have increasingly emphasised the obligation of both parents to support their children. In effect, since the payment of maintenance by the non-custodial parent is very difficult to enforce, it would appear that in many cases major responsibility for the maintenance of children devolves upon the custodial parent, who must also initiate the process of enforcement of the non-custodial parent's maintenance obligations.

These comparative case studies have identified policy issues which require further attention in Australia: the relationship between government income support for supporting parents and cash transfers for children; the need for indexation of the components of child income support; policies for encouraging and facilitating single parents' labour force participation, particularly through training and retraining programs; examination of the disincentives to supporting parents' labour force participation in social security extra-earnings regulations and in childcare policy; the development of comprehensive housing policies which provide support for single parent families in employment, as well as in the social security system; the establishment of a centralised agency for the collection and distribution of maintenance payments.

APPENDIX

Single Parent Earning Half AWE and Three-Quarters AWE: Extra Income Gained from FIS Compared with that Gained from Partial Benefit or Pension

On half AWE a single parent, regardless of the number of children present, will gain more from combining earned income with partial benefit or pension than from combining earned income with FIS. Even though at this level of earned income the benefit gained is reduced by the extra earnings test while the FIS is not, the income from the full benefit begins at a much higher level than FIS and therefore must be considerably reduced before it reaches FIS level. At the higher level of income of three-quarters AWE a single parent with more than one child will also gain more from partial benefit than from FIS. At this income level a single parent with one child would be eligible for neither FIS nor partial benefit.

The following calculations are based on FIS and benefit/pension levels announced in the 1983-84 budget for November 1983. The seasonally adjusted male average weekly earnings for the June quarter 1983 ($347.30) is used as a base.

From 1 November 1983 the maximum rate of FIS is to be $12 a week per child. Families will be entitled to the maximum rate of FIS if they have an allowable income of up to $199 a week with additional income of $24 for each child before payment ceases. Income above $199 reduces FIS payable by 50¢ in each $1.

To calculate partial FIS:

Partial FIS = FIS - ((income - income test income level) x 50¢)

The maximum rate for a widows' pension or supporting parents' benefit for a single parent with one child over 6 years will be $103.90 from 1 November 1983. This benefit increases by $12 for each additional child. The full benefit is reduced by 50¢ in $1 for other income in excess of $36 a week where there is one child, plus $6 for each additional child. No benefit is payable when weekly income reaches $243.80 where there is one child over 6 years, plus $30 for each additional child. The following calculations assume that all children present are over 6.

To calculate partial pension or benefit:

partial benefit = benefit - ((extra income - income test income level) x 50¢)

1. Single parent earning half AWE ($173.65) with one child:

(a) receiving FIS -

Total income = $173.65 (half AWE)
$ 12.00 (full FIS)
$185.65

(b) receiving partial benefit -

partial benefit = $103.90 - (($173.65 - $36) x 50¢)
= $ 35.07

Total income = $173.65 (half AWE)
$ 35.07 (partial benefit)
$208.72

2. Single parent earning half AWE with two children:

(a) receiving FIS -

Total income = $173.65 (half AWE)
$ 24.00 (full FIS)
$197.65

(b) receiving partial benefit -

partial benefit = $115.90 - (($173.65 - $42) x 50¢)
= $ 50.07

Total income = $173.65 (half AWE)
$ 50.07 (partial benefit)
$223.72

3. Single parent earning half AWE with three children:

(a) receiving FIS -

Total income = $173.65 (half AWE)
$ 36.00 (full FIS)
$209.65

(b) receiving partial benefit -

partial benefit = $127.90 - (($173.65 - $48) x 50¢)
= $ 65.07
Total income = $173.65 (half AWE)
$ 65.07 (partial benefit)
$238.72

4. Single parent earning three-quarters AWE ($260.48) with one child:

(a) receiving FIS -

This level of income - $260.48 - is over the FIS income limit for a family with one child of $223.

Total income = $260.48 (three-quarters AWE)

(b) receiving benefit -

This level of income is over the benefit income limit for a single parent with one child of $243.80.

Total income = $260.48 (three-quarters AWE)

5. Single parent earning three-quarters AWE with two children:

(a) receiving FIS -

This level of income is above the FIS income limit for a family with two children of $247.00.

Total income = $260.48 (three-quarters AWE)

(b) receiving benefit -

partial benefit = $115.90 - (($260.48 - $42) x 50¢)
= $ 6.66
Total income = $260.48 (three-quarters AWE)
$ 6.66 (partial benefit)
$267.14

6. Single parent earning three-quarters AWE with three children:

(a) receiving FIS -

partial FIS = $ 36.00 - (($260.48 - $199) x 50¢)
= $ 5.26

Total income = $260.48 (three-quarters AWE)
5.26 (partial FIS)
$265.74

(b) receiving partial benefit -

partial benefit = $127.90 - (($260.48 - $48) x 50¢)
= $ 21.66

Total income = $260.48 (three-quarters AWE)
21.66 (partial benefit)
$282.14

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TABLE 1. One and Two Parent Families with Dependent Children as a Proportion of all Families with Dependent Children, Australia, 1974/75, 1979-1982

		Two Parent Families	OTHER FAMILIES			Total Families
			Female Headed	Male Headed	Total Other Families	
1974	N	1,846,000	157,800	24,700	182,500	2,028,500
	%	91.00	7.78	1.22	9.00	100.00
1975	N	1,867,200	148,700	25,000	173,700	2,040,900
	%	91.49	7.29	1.22	8.51	100.00
1979	N	1,844,400	224,600	45,400	270,000	2,114,400
	%	87.23	10.62	2.15	12.77	100.00
1980	N	1,856,200	228,700	40,000	268,700	2,124,900
	%	87.35	10.76	1.88	12.65	100.00
1981	N	1,860,400	236,800	45,300	282,200	2,142.600
	%	86.83	11.05	2.11	13.17	100.00
1982	N	1,864,300	260,700	45,500	306,200	2,170,500
	%	85.89	12.01	2.10	14.11	100.00

Note: Other families are families with non-married heads and with dependent children.

Source: A.B.S., Family Status and Employment Status of the Population, November 1974 and November 1975 (Ref.No.6.55), and

A.B.S., Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia July 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982 (Cat.No.6224.0)

TABLE 2. Single Parents by Sex and Marital Status, Australia, 1975 & 1982 (%)

	1975	1982
Female Single Parents:		
Separated	40.3	30.2
Divorced	21.2	36.8
Widowed	26.2	12.7
Never married	12.3	20.2
Total	100.0	99.9
Total number	141,200	238,600
Male Single Parents:		
Separated	45.0	30.7
Divorced	17.5	35.9
Widowed	35.4	29.5
Never married	2.1	4.0
Total	100.0	100.1
Total number	18,900	25,100

Notes: The 1975 survey data exclude a small percentage of single parents who did not state their marital status (2.1%) and a small percentage (0.8%) who were still married.

Source: A.B.S., General Social Survey Australian Families May 1975 (Cat.No.4107.0) Table 20, and A.B.S., Australian Families, 1982 (Preliminary) (Cat.No.4407.0) Table 8.

TABLE 3. Number and Proportion of Sole Parents in Receipt of Income Support, Australia, 1974-1981

	November 1974	November 1975	May 1976	May 1977	July 1979	July 1980	June 1981
Female sole parents:							
1. Number in receipt of income support	102,689	119,100	133,762	148,407	173,375	184,337	199,891
2. Total number	157,800	148,700	172,300	182,100	224,600	228,700	236,800
3. 1 as % of 2	65.1	80.1	77.6	81.5	77.2	80.6	84.4
Male sole parents:							
4. Number in receipt of income support	2,374	3,993	4,100	4,653	6,656	7,400	8,199
5. Total number	24,700	25,000	31,000	31,700	45,400	40,000	45,300
6. 4 as % of 5	9.6	16.0	13.2	14.7	14.7	18.5	18.1
Total sole parents:							
7. Number in receipt of income support	111,915	133,634	137,862	153,060	180,031	191,737	208,090
8. Total number	182,500	173,700	203,300	213,800	270,000	268,700	282,200
9. 7 as % of 8	61.3	76.9	67.8	71.6	66.7	71.4	73.7

Notes: The numbers in receipt of income support include single parents in receipt of income from supporting parents' benefit, widows' pension, unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, etc. The numbers of female and male sole parents in receipt of income support do not sum to the total sole parents in receipt of income support for 1974 and 1975 because the total numbers have been separately estimated.

Source: Development Division, Department of Social Security (1982), Tables 1,2 and 4.

TABLE 4. Labour Force Status of Single Parents, Australia, 1974-1982

	1974	1979	1980	1981	1982
Females, not married with dependent children:					
Total number of families	157,800	224,600	229,500	236,800	260,900
No.of families where parent not employed	89,300	139,600	142,700	147,900	169,600
Employment to population ratio %	43.4	37.8	37.8	37.6	35.0
Labour force participation rate %	45.2	43.4	42.8	41.2	39.3
Unemployment rate %	4.1	12.7	11.5	8.8	11.1
% of total labour force (male and female)	1.2	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
% of total unemployed (male and female)	1.8	3.5	3.1	2.6	2.5
Males, not married with dependent children:					
Total number of families	24,700	45,400	40,600	45,300	45,500
No.of families where parent not employed	2,300	8,000	10,400	8,000	11,400
Employment to population ratio %	90.7	82.4	74.4	82.6	74.9
Labour force participation rate %	94.7	87.0	78.6	87.9	83.5
Unemployment rate %	4.3	5.3	5.3	6.3	10.3
% of total labour force (male and female)	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.6	0.6
% of total unemployed (male and female)	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.8	0.9

Source: A.B.S., Family Status and Employment Status of the Population, November 1974 and November 1975 (Ref.No.6.55), and

A.B.S., Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia July 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982 (Cat.No.6224.0)

TABLE 5. The Proportion of Single Parents on Income Support Receiving Extra Income, Supplementary Assistance and Fringe Benefits, Australia, 1972-73 to 1981-82

	% OF SINGLE PARENTS ON INCOME SUPPORT RECEIVING:								
	Nil Income	Income To Level 1	Income To Level 2	Income To Level 3	Income Above Level 3	Full Benefit	Supplementary Assistance	Fringe Benefits/ P.H.B. Cards	Total Number
Class A Widows:									
1973	56.9	6.6	16.5	20.0		80.3	31.5	91.2	57,872
1974	52.0	5.6	19.7	10.2	12.5	77.3	31.8	88.8	64,086
1975	51.4	7.2	17.8	10.9	12.7	76.4	34.2	87.8	66,518
1976	50.7	6.8	17.9	11.1	13.5	75.4	34.6	87.1	71,089
1977	53.1	7.0	16.2	10.6	13.2	76.2	36.2	88.2	76,059
1978	53.8	6.5	16.2	10.4	13.1	76.5	37.7	88.6	82,392
1979	54.2	6.0	16.3	10.8	12.8	76.5	39.2	88.7	88,683
1980	55.2	5.6	16.1	12.8	10.3	76.9	39.9	90.7	91,142
1981	56.0	5.2	15.8	12.4	10.7	77.0	40.2	88.8	87,837
1982	57.2	20.1		12.2	10.5	77.1	40.4	89.2	84,800
Supporting Parents Benefit - Females:									
1975	61.9	13.1	10.0	5.6	9.4	85.0	63.2	n.a.	36,015
1976	60.5	13.[illegible]	11.9	5.9	8.3	85.7	61.7	91.5	45,542
1977	[illegible]3.0	1[illegible].4	11.9	5.8	7.9	86.3	62.5	92.1	50,934
1978	64.[illegible]	9.3	12.5	5.6	7.8	86.7	62.8	89.9	55,364
1979	67.5	7.5	12.3	5.0	7.6	87.4	64.9	92.9	59,365
1980	69.6	6.0	11.5	6.4	6.2	87.1	66.0	94.3	66,604
1981	71.9	4.7	10.0	6.6	6.8	86.6	65.1	94.2	101,583
1982	76.8	11.7		5.2	6.3	88.3	65.1	93.1	110,019
Supporting Parents Benefit - Males:									
1978	71.9	2.1	4.0	21.9		78.1	47.7	86.5	2,069
1979	75.1	2.5	3.7	2.7	16.1	81.2	48.0	84.0	3,133
1980	78.5	2.0	3.8	4.6	11.1	84.3	50.7	89.2	3,821
1981	80.1	2.0	3.7	3.8	10.4	85.8	53.3	90.0	5,048
1982	81.1	5.8		3.5	9.6	86.4	50.8	89.6	5,923

Notes: Income to Level 1 = income allowed for receipt of some supplementary assistance;
Income to Level 2 = income allowed for receipt of full benefit;
Income to Level 3 = income allowed for receipt of fringe benefits;
Income above Level 3 = income allowed for receipt of partial benefit.

The income levels are set at level applicable for single parent with one child over six.

Source: Department of Social Security, Annual Report, 1972-73 to 1981-82 and Ten Year Statistical Summary 1973 to 1982.

TABLE 6. The Disposable Income of Families in Receipt of Maximum Social Security Payments: Proportion of Post-Tax Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, 1971-72 to 1982-83 (Estimate)

	Single Parent	
Financial Year	1 Child	2 Children
1971-72	37.3	45.0
1972-73	37.1	44.0
1973-74	39.7	46.3
1974-75	37.3	43.2
1975-76	39.9	46.5
1976-77	41.8	50.8
1977-78	41.5	49.6
1978-79	40.4	47.9
1979-80	39.2	46.1
1980-81	39.3	46.1
1981-82	37.9	44.3
1982-83(est.)	38.0	44.3

Notes: Average weekly earnings are for a single person without dependents. Figures are affected by an additional pension pay-day in 1982-83.

Source: Department of Social Security (1983[illegible]) Attachment E.

TABLE 7. Equivalences implicit in the Australian Income Security system: Comparison of Selected Financial Years 1964-65 to 1982-83 (including family allowance and tax provisions)

	1964-65	1968-69	1973-74	1976-77	1978-79	1982-83	June 1984
				PENSIONER: RENTING			
Single persons:							
with no children	.59	.64	.67	.67	.66	.67	.67
with one child	.87	.90	.90	.88	.82	.83	.84
under 6 or invalid	-	-	.95	.91	.85	.86	.84
with two children	.98	1.07	1.04	1.05	.97	.95	.96
younger under 6 or invalid	-	-	1.09	1.08	1.00	.97	.96
with three children	1.12	1.23	1.21	1.34	1.12	1.09	1.11
youngest under 6 or invalid	-	-	1.26	1.27	1.15	1.11	1.11
Couples:							
with no children	1.05	1.08	1.10	1.07	1.06	1.07	1.07
with one child	1.14	1.20	1.23	1.22	1.18	1.18	1.18
with two children	1.25	1.35	1.37	1.40	1.32	1.31	1.31
with three children	1.39	1.51	1.54	1.58	1.48	1.45	1.46
with four children	1.53	1.68	1.71	1.77	1.64	1.59	1.60
with five children	1.67	1.86	1.89	1.97	1.80	1.75	1.75
				PENSIONER: NOT RENTING			
Single persons:							
with no children	.55	.56	.57	.60	.60	.60	.60
with one child	.83	.84	.80	.81	.76	.75	.77
under 6 or invalid	-	-	.85	.84	.79	.77	.77
with two children	.94	.99	.94	.98	.91	.88	.90
younger under 6 or invalid	-	-	.99	1.01	.94	.89	.90
with three children	1.07	1.15	1.11	1.17	1.06	1.03	1.04
youngest under 6 or invalid	-	-	1.16	1.20	1.09	1.04	1.04
Couples:							
with no children	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
with one child	1.09	1.12	1.13	1.15	1.13	1.11	1.12
with two children	1.21	1.26	1.27	1.33	1.27	1.23	1.25
with three children	1.35	1.43	1.44	1.51	1.42	1.38	1.39
with four children	1.48	1.60	1.61	1.70	1.58	1.52	1.53
with five children	1.62	1.78	1.79	1.90	1.74	1.67	1.68

Note: Equivalences are based on the net value of assistance for a pensioner couple with no dependent children who are not paying rent. This has been set as 1.00.

Source: Whiteford (1983), Table 3.

TABLE 8. Family Allowances for Two Children as a Proportion of Average Weekly Earnings for Males, Australia, 1976-1983

	1. Weekly family allowance for two children ($)	2. Average weekly male earnings ($)	1 as % of 2
Sept. 1976	8.50	179.69	4.7
1977	8.50	192.60	4.4
1978	8.50	210.36	4.0
1979	8.52	227.56	3.7
1980	8.52	257.08	3.3
1981	8.52	286.60	3.0
1982	8.52	333.60	2.6
June 1983	12.77	347.36	3.7

Note: In the September 1981 average weekly earnings series the A.B.S. introduced a new method of obtaining data. This means the figures before September 1981 are not strictly comparable with those after. For Table 8, the suggested calculations of A.B.S. for improving comparability, by linking the old and new series to a common index, have been used.

Source: A.B.S., Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia, June Quarter 1983 (Cat.No.6302.0), Table 3, and Department of Social Security (1983c), Table 11.

TABLE 9. Labour Force Participation Rate of Single and Married Women with Dependent Children, Australia, 1974-1982

	1974	1975	1977	1979	1980	1981	1982
Wife with dependent children	34.9	37.7	42.4	44.4	46.0	45.5	45.7
Not-married female with dependent children	45.2	47.9	42.4	43.4	42.8	41.2	39.3

Source: A.B.S., *Family Status and Employment Status of the Population, November 1974 and November 1975* (Ref.No.6.55), and

A.B.S., *Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia* July 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982 (Cat.No.6224.0)

TABLE 10. Employment Rates of Women with Dependent Children, Australia, 1982 (%)

	Married women with dependent children	Not-married women with dependent children
Employed full-time	18.7	21.1
Employed part-time	24.3	13.8
Unemployed	2.6	4.4
Not in the labour force	54.3	60.6
	99.9	99.9
Of those employed, % employed full-time	43.6	60.4

Source: A.B.S., Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia July 1982 (Cat.No.6224.0)Table 3

TABLE 11. Educational Attainment of Female Single Parents by Labour Force Status, Australia, 1975 (%)

	Employed Full-time	Employed Part-time	Unemployed	Not in the Labour Force	Total	Workforce Participation Rate	Total Number
No schooling	0.0	36.8	0.0	63.2	100.0	36.8	644
Left school before 15 yrs	17.2	17.8	1.0	64.1	100.1	35.9	45,344
Left school 15-16 yrs	22.5	15.7	3.2	58.6	100.0	41.4	50,821
Trade certificate	24.7	17.4	3.1	54.7	99.9	45.3	5,106
Left school 17 yrs and over	36.8	15.4	7.8	40.0	100.0	60.0	8,254
Other qualifications	32.2	28.0	1.3	38.5	100.0	61.5	19,376
Technical certificate	39.6	20.5	5.7	34.2	100.0	65.8	7,863
Tertiary, non-university	47.7	41.8	0.0	10.6	100.1	89.4	3,294
University	62.5	27.9	0.0	9.6	100.0	90.4	1,638
							142,340

Note: This table excludes 1.9% of female single parents who did not state their educational qualifications and 0.1% who were still at school. "Other" qualifications includes shorthand, typing, writing courses, specialist technical courses, etc.

Source: Unpublished data from the A.B.S. 1975 family survey.

TABLE 12. Median Income for Full-Year, Full-Time Employed Women by Educational Attainment, Australia, 1978-79

	Median Income ($)
Left school 13 yrs or under	7,580
Left school 15 or 14 yrs	8,000
Left school 16 yrs	8,000
Trade certificate	8,140
Left school 18 yrs or over	8,380
Left school 17 yrs	8,400
Other qualifications	8,920
Certificate (non-trade)/diploma	10,000
Degree	13,040

Note: The educational attainment level "Certificate (non-trade)/diploma" combines the two levels of non-degree tertiary and technical certificate.

Source: A.B.S., Income Distribution, Australia 1978-79 Supplement to Social Indicators No.3 (Cat.No.4108.0), Table 8.

TABLE 13. **Program Assistance in 1980-81 and Labour Market Experience According to Age and Sex**

	15-19 Yrs		20-24 Yrs		25 Yrs or Older		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
	%		%		%		%	Number
Program Assistance(a)								
- Education-based	39.0	38.5	6.3	9.0	3.5	3.7	100.0	11,768
- Employment-based	34.2	37.5	11.7	8.2	5.4	2.9	100.0	77,061
- specialised	32.8	23.4	13.3	6.4	18.6	5.5	100.0	8,001
Total	34.6 (33,580)	36.4 (35,280)	11.2 (10,853)	8.1 (7,861)	6.3 (6,128)	3.2 (3,128)	100.0	96,830
ABS Indicators(b)								
Unemployment(c)	15.7	17.4	11.4	10.9	23.5	21.2	100.0	na
Longer-Term Unemployment(c)	12.8	17.0	12.5	10.5	24.7	22.5	100.0	na
Median Duration of Unemployment(d)	weeks 9.8	weeks 11.5	weeks 12.3	weeks 11.1	weeks 12.6	weeks 12.0		na

(a) Department of Employment and Industrial Relations.

(b) Based on published and unpublished data from ABS Labour Force Experience Survey, February 1981.

(c) Based on "Persons who looked for work at some time during the survey year" - note that this definition of "unemployed" status is not as rigorous as that used in the Labour Force monthly series. Includes only those unemployed for 17 weeks or more.

(d) These measures indicate that 50 per cent of each gooup experienced durations of unemployment below and above the numbers of weeks quoted.

Source : M.A. Hoy and G.L. Lampe, "Women in National Training and Employment Programs", Bureau of Labour Market Research, Canberra, 1982.

TABLE 14. Commencements in Commonwealth Government Manpower Programs by Age and Sex, Australia, July 1980 to March 1981 (%)

	15-19 years		20-24 years		25 years or older		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Total
General Training Assistance	19.1	13.9	15.6	9.3	27.0	15.0	100
Special Youth Employment Training Program (SYETP)	37.2	44.0	10.2	8.3	0.2	0.1	100
Skills in Demand (SID)	47.3	23.9	12.0	12.6	3.0	1.2	100
Pre-Apprenticeship and the Special Apprenticeship Program (SAP)	82.5	7.2	9.2	0.6	0.5	-	100
Transition from School-to-Work	37.7	51.1	3.1	8.0	-	0.1	100
Employment Program for Unemployed Youth (EPUY)	32.7	48.2	8.5	10.5	-	0.1	100
Training programs for Aboriginals	32.7	25.7	14.2	6.2	15.7	5.5	100
Training programs for disabled persons	36.4	21.6	12.3	4.4	21.5	3.8	100
Special groups	40.0	18.7	10.7	6.7	18.6	5.3	100

Source : Women's Bureau, Department of Employment and Youth Affairs, Facts on Women at Work (1981), Canberra.

TABLE 15. Department of Employment and Industrial Relations Training Program Expenditure 1978-79 to 1983-84 (Estimate)

	1978-79		1979-80		1980-81		1981-82		1982-83		1983-84	
	$'000	%	$'000	%	$'000	%	$'000	%	$'000	%	Estimated Expenditure	%
Trade Training Program												
. CRAFT	24,431	16.7	42,702	43.4	64,451	43.8	78,749	42.1	84,900	38.9	97,000	36.6
. Special Apprentice Training	3,700	2.5	3,100	3.2	3,600	2.4	3,360	1.8	10,500	4.8	20,800	7.9
Skills Training Program												
. General Training Assistance	15,900	10.9	10,200	10.4	11,463	7.8	9,280	5.0	6,800	3.1	5,400	2.0
. Labour Adjustment Training	-		-		478	0.3	2,482	1.3	3,600	1.6	12,000	4.5
. Industry training services	1,174	0.8	2,006	2.0	3,000	2.0	4,500	2.4	5,200	2.4	7,000	2.6
Youth Training Program												
. School to work transition allowance	2,300	1.6	3,000	3.1	4,703	3.2	8,423	4.[illegible]	11,10[illegible]	5.1	12,200	4.6
. Pre-apprenticeship allowance	1,150	0.8	1,150	1.2	1,587	1.1	1,146	0.6	1,900	0.9	3,500	1.3
. Work experience	82,640	56.6	24,158	24.6	41,255	28.0	53,702	28.7	63,600	29.1	74,700	28.2
Special Training Program												
. Training for Aboriginals	13,400	9.2	11,000	11.2	13,928	9.5	19,044	10.2	24,600	11.3	25,800	9.7
. Training for the disabled	1,400	1.0	1,000	1.0	2,719	1.8	6,471	3.5	6,300	2.9	6,500	2.5
Total	146,096	100.1	98,316	100.1	147,184	99.9	187,157	100.1	218,500	100.1	264,900	99.9

Source: M.A.Hoy and G.[illegible], "Women in National Training and Employment Programs", Bureau of Labour Market Research, Canberra, 1982, and 1983-84 Budget Pa[illegible] No.1.

TABLE 16. Single Parent Families with Dependent Children (male and female headed): Labour Force Status by Age of Youngest Child, Australia, 1982

Families with dependent children present	Employed Full-time		Employed Part-time		Total Employed		In Labour Force		Not in the Labour Force		Total	
Age of Youngest Child:	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-4 yrs.	15.9	17.1	8.0	8.6	23.9	25.7	29.6	31.9	63.2	68.1	92.8	100
5-9	20.8	25.3	10.9	13.3	31.7	38.6	35.8	43.6	46.4	56.4	82.2	100
10-14	34.3	38.2	12.7	14.2	47.1	52.5	51.1	57.0	38.5	43.0	89.7	100
15-20	15.6	37.5	6.9	16.6	22.5	54.1	23.9	57.5	17.7	42.5	41.6	100
Total	86.6	28.3	38.6	12.6	125.2	40.9	140.5	45.9	165.6	54.1	306.2	100

Note: N = '000

Source: A.B.S., Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Families, Australia July 1982 (Cat.No.6224.0), Table 30.

TABLE 17. Housing Conditions of One Parent and Two Parent Families, Australia, 1975 (%)

	Female headed single parent families	Male headed single parent families	Two parent families
	N= 145,200	N= 19,600	N= 1,600,300
Dwelling type:			
House	79.1	87.2	92.4
Flat, townhouse, home unit	20.2	11.7	6.4
Improvised or special dwelling	0.7	1.1	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Nature of tenancy:			
Own or buying	34.4	54.1	71.5
Rent	45.3	26.0	22.9
Board	11.3	12.8	0.4
Other (includes lodging and living rent free)	7.8	4.6	1.9
Not stated	1.2	2.0	3.3
Total	100.0	99.5	100.0
Accommodation cost as % of gross weekly income of family:			
Less than 10%	17.8	28.6	35.7
10% and under 20%	22.2	32.7	24.7
20% and under 30%	15.3	10.7	6.9
30% or more	20.0	8.2	3.1
Free accommodation	6.5	6.1	1.8
Not stated	18.3	13.8	27.8
Total	100.1	100.1	100.0
Renting from:			
Private landlord	28.7	15.3	14.3
State Housing Authority	15.8	7.7	5.1
Not renting	53.4	71.9	73.8
Other and not stated	2.1	5.1	6.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: A.B.S., General Social Survey Australian Families May 1975 (Cat.No.4107.0), Tables 3,4,5,18 and 19.

TABLE 18. Accommodation Cost by Nature of Tenancy for Female Single Parents, Australia, 1975 (%)

	Own/Buying	Renting	Boarding	Other
Accommodation cost as % of gross weekly income of family:				
Free - 10%	48.2	14.2	24.3	50.3
11-20%	26.5	34.5	56.2	15.0
21-30%	9.7	33.9	8.7	15.0
31-40%	10.4	13.1	10.8	15.9
41% or more	5.2	4.3	0.0	3.7
	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9

Notes: "Other" includes lodging and living rent free. The table excludes a small percentage (0.4%) of female single parents who did not state their accommodation tenancy and a larger percentage (11.6%) who did not state the cost of accommodation.

Source: Unpublished data from the A.B.S. 1975 family survey.

TABLE 19. Expenditure of Households with One Adult and Children by Household Income, Australia, 1975-76

	WEEKLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME					
	Under $80	$80 and Under $140	$140 and Under $200	$200 and Under $260	$260 or More	All Households
Total number of households	36,400	48,800	27,400	19,000	10,900	142,500
1. Average weekly expenditure on housing ($)	13.56	23.06	27.18	19.61	23.71	21.02
2. Average weekly household income ($)	58.83	111.12	160.94	220.63	351.81	140.43
3. Average weekly total expenditure ($)	78.60	115.30	147.27	144.50	199.44	122.43
1 as % of 2	23.0	20.8	16.9	8.9	6.7	15.0
3 as % of 2	133.6	103.8	91.5	65.5	56.7	87.2
% of households renting	83.0	61.5	67.2	54.2	12.8	63.4
% of all households	25.5	34.2	19.2	13.3	7.6	

Source: A.B.S., Household Expenditure Survey 1975-76, Bulletin 2 (Cat.No.6517.0), Table 2.6.

TABLE 20 Tax/Transfer Treatment of Different Family Types as Percentage of Net Average Production Worker's Wage (APWW) for Unmarried Males

	Australia	Sweden
1. Sole parent, not in labour force	50.0	93.8
2. Sole parent, employed at ½ APWW	78.8	123.1
3. Sole parent, employed at ½ APWW, plus maintenance	82.1	123.1
4. Two parents, one employed at APWW	107.2	133.1
5. Two parents, one employed at APWW, one at ½ APWW	155.9	170.0
6. Married couple, one employed at APWW	102.6	103.4

Note: These calculations are based on 1979 data.

Source: Kamerman & Kahn (1982), Table 4.

Child care from a consumer perspective: The experience of 156 Sydney families

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The aim of this paper is to provide some indication of the significance the child care services have for the families in Australia —both parents and children. The paper is based on the results obtained from a survey of 156 families using formal child care services in the Sydney metropolitan area. The survey was conducted in the second half of 1982 and entailed comprehensive interviews with parents who were using services as well as with the providers of services, that is, directors of day care centres and pre-schools, and co-ordinators of family day care schemes.

This paper contains only the findings of one part of the study dealing with the experience of parents, thus presenting the issues of child care from one perspective, that of the parents. The other findings are still analysed, and the complete results of the study will be published shortly. For this reason, the interpretation of results presented in this paper and any implications for policy on the provision of services for young children need to be taken with appropriate qualifications.

The study was conducted with the aim to ascertain the extent and form of child care services used by families and the reasons for the use of services. By obtaining this information directly from parents and the providers of services we intended to find out whether the assumptions on which the policies on services for young children were formulated and the services provided were meeting the needs of parents and children.

The impression we have gained from the available data, such as the surveys conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (e.g. ABS Cat.No. 4402.0, June 1980), the study by Deagan et al (1981) and others, and our own study (Sweeney and Jamrozik, 1982) was that the stated policies on children's services, especially the policies of the, then, Commonwealth Government on the allocation of funds and provision of services according to certain criteria of "needs", were not reflected in practice. For example, the data from the ABS survey of 1980, especially, suggested that, first, the use of child care services, both formal and informal, was quite extensive; and, second, that the users did not necessarily fall into the categories of "need" as defined in the Government policy.

On the one hand, the Government policy (from 1976 to 1982) on child care services seemed to be based on the assumptions that: only some children needed those services, e.g. children of working single parents; that services were needed in unusual situations rather than in normal situations; and that, by and large, the priority of use in the formal services was to be given to "disadvantaged" children. On the other hand, the data on the usage of child care services indicated that most children of pre-school age used the services, both formal and informal, at some stage; that services were used as part of the normal situations of the daily life of families; and that, by and large, formal services were used by children of middle-class parents rather than by children of working-class parents or of disadvantaged parents.

These findings led us to the question : "If the use of child care arrangements was so extensive, what was the role of child care in the lives of families today?"

To find out what child care services meant to parents, we decided to carry out an extensive and in-depth survey with the aim of assessing the extent of child care arrangements used within families (including the use of formal care); when they used child care; how that care was related to the needs of the family; the reasons why parents used child care arrangements, and whether they wanted different arrangements; and the issues important to them in their use of arrangements. In order to ascertain the value and meaning of care for parents, we decided to examine the pattern of arrangements for all the children living in the household. Thus for our survey a child care arrangement was taken to be any regular arrangement at any time of the day (or night) on any day of the week (including weekends) when the child was not in the care of the person responsible, usually taken to be the mother or father if the mother was absent. An arrangement was regarded as regular if it occurred at least once a month.

We also carried out a survey of the providers of formal services to identify what services they offered; whether they would like to change the nature of the services they provided, or their method of delivery, and, if so, whether they felt they were constrained from changing their service.

The main objective of the study was to determine whether there were any discrepancies between how governments (we included here the State governments) through their policies saw or defined the need, and how parents perceived their needs for child care, and how and why services were or were not able to meet the needs experienced and perceived by parents.

METHOD

The study was conducted in the metropolitan area of Sydney. It covered five local government areas which represented a broad range of different socio-economic levels. For each area a list was obtained of child care services both community based and commercial, operating in the area. In order to investigate the issues surrounding the use and provision of the variety of services available for young children, a selection was made of at least one of the following service types per area (if the type of service was available in the area: not all the types of service were available in each of the five local government areas included in the study):

family day care scheme
full day pre-school
long day care centre
neighbourhood children's centre
occasional care centre
sessional pre-school

If there were both community based and commercial versions of a service operating in the area, one of each was chosen. If there was considerable variation in the size of a particular service type, one large and one small were selected. If there was a service which did not conform to the usual style of such provision that, too, was included, e.g. a mobile preschool. If there was more than one of a given category of service, the choice was made randomly.

This process ultimately led to a sample of 49 services. Interviews took place with an appropriate person, usually the director or co-ordinator, in each of these services. Information was collected on the establishment of the service, its funding (when community based), management, administration, parental involvement, and any special features. In addition, observations about their users (both parents and children) and opinions on whether their mode of operation could be altered for the better were gathered. A statistical profile of the service (numbers and ages of children attending, patterns of use, priority systems, etc.) was also requested and 42 service providers were both willing and able to comply with this, although not always with the degree of detail wanted.

Table 1 shows the types of services included in our sample. Where not otherwise stated a service is community based.

TABLE 1 in here

We were unable to randomly select users of services from the records of the services we surveyed because of the problems of confidentiality. We therefore asked service providers to select a cross section of their users and to request their participation in the survey. Thirty eight service providers co-operated in this way, and this led to 146 successful interviews with families. Four more service providers felt unable to approach users directly but were willing to advertise for volunteers. This led to another 10 successful interviews, resulting in a total of 156. The remaining service providers were unable or chose not to be involved in that stage of the study.

Table 2 shows the numbers of families interviewed by the various service types through which they were contacted. As a family can have more than one child attending a service, the numbers of contact children are also given. The 195 contact children do not constitute our entire sample of children. Information was also collected on the use of child care by the sisters and brothers of these children when they were aged 11 or under. This led to a total sample of 333 children aged 11 or under.

TABLE 2 in here

As the sample was contacted through formal child care services, it was to be expected that each family would use at least one formal child care service on a regular basis, here defined as at least once a month. There were 2 families which did not accord with that expectation. These were families where the formal arrangement had been terminated between the times of referral and interview. Thus our sample is not one of all families with children, nor is it a sample of families using formal or informal child care as it does not include, except in one of the cases just mentioned, families using informal care only. It is a sample of families in which formal child care is used regularly or, in 2 cases, was so used in the recent past.

In our interviews with parents we collected basic demographic and socio-economic data about the families (e.g. number and ages of children and employment of parents) and information on past and present child care arrangements, the day-to-day management of that care, why care was used, what was wanted from it, and whether changes in arrangements or certain aspects of arrangements were desired.

Our survey was comprehensive in the range of questions we asked and it was different from others in five main ways:

1. We looked at issues across different service types.
2. We covered commercial centres.
3. We looked at combinations of arrangements and included child care used at weekends.
4. We did not assume that families' requirements would fit into neat prescribed categories. Many of the questions we asked were open-ended. Thus we did not talk in terms of, for example, preference for pre-school over occasional care, but rather in terms of the features of arrangements such as the number of hours and days wanted.
5. On the assumption that child care was only one of many aspects and functions of family life, we attempted to locate the issues of child care in the context of the process of daily life experienced by families. The time scale of family activities we used was the week rather than a single day, although we also took note of the periods that departed from the normal pattern, e.g. school holidays.

THE SAMPLE

1. Profile of Families

A profile of the sample of the 156 families we interviewed is outlined briefly below.

- 81% were two parent families and 19% were one parent families. (Of the 30 one parent families 26 were headed by the mother and 4 by the father).
- including only children in the family unit aged 11 or under, 23% of families had one child, 46% had two children and 31% had three or more children.
- the majority of both mothers and fathers were Australian born (74% and 71% respectively).
- approximately 40% of mothers and 25% of fathers had an education level up to or including the School Certificate, while 35% of mothers and 33% of fathers had a tertiary level diploma or degree. An additional 10% of mothers and 18% of fathers had a trade or technical qualification.
- 96% of fathers were either full time employed or self-employed, with 8% of these working variable shifts.
- 23% of mothers were either full time employed or self-employed with a further 26% part time employed and 5% casually employed. Of mothers in some form of paid employment 2% worked variable shifts.
- of all working fathers 26% regularly (at least once a month) worked at weekends and 56% regularly worked "anti-social hours" (starting/finishing before 8.30a.m. and/or starting/finishing after 5.30p.m.).
- of all working mothers 21% regularly worked at weekends and 29% regularly worked "anti-social hours", (starting/finishing before 8.30a.m. and/or starting/finishing after 5.30p.m.).
- families in which both parents or the sole parent were employed full- or part-time formed 62% of all families.
- for both mothers and fathers in paid employment the largest occupational group was 'Professional, Technical and Related Workers' (41% and 30% respectively). The second most often occurring occupational category was, for mothers, 'Clerical Workers' (34%) and, for fathers, 'Tradesmen, Production-Process Workers and Labourers' (18%).
- the usual problems of collection of income data were experienced and thus the results must be treated with caution. Of the 137 families giving information on income 19% had a gross weekly income of less than $300, 41% of $300 to $600 and 28% of more than $600.

Comparisons of the characteristics of families in our sample with the characteristics of the population of New South Wales obtained from the 1981 Census of the Population and Housing indicate that the socio-economic status of the families in the sample (if measured by parents' education and occupation) was, on the average, higher than the average for the population of the State (see Tables 3 and 4). In other aspects, such as the number of children per family and ethnic composition,the differences were minimal.

TABLE 3 and 4 in here

2. Profile of Children

In our sample we included both the contact children (that is, children who attended child care services from which the sample of families was drawn) and their siblings. The total sample conprised 195 contact children and 138 siblings, giving the total number of 333 children in the 156 families (Table 5).

The contact children were almost all below school age. Over two-thirds of the contact children were between 3 and school age, which reflects the policy on age for attendance of many of the referral service types. The inclusion of siblings balanced out the age distribution somewhat, although the great majority, 72%, of the total sample of children were still not at school.

TABLE 5 in here

WHAT KINDS OF SERVICES DO FAMILIES USE?

1. Extent of Arrangements

Of our sample of 333 children 11 years or under, 104, or 31%, used no arrangement other than care by the person responsible. Of this 104 children, 74 were school age (71%) and only 18 (17%) were under 2 years. However, while it is probable that the extent of informal arrangemnets and care by self has been underestimated, it is worthwhile noting that for all but a few of the school-age children who apparently used no care had mothers whose work coincided with school hours. Of the remaining 229 children, 164 (71.6%) used one arrangement and 65 (28.4%) used 2 ore more arrangements (Table 6).

TABLE 6 in here

2. Patterns of Use of Formal and Informal Care

For the 229 children who used some form(s) of care arrangement the most common pattern of usage was that of one formal arrangement only. The second most frequently found pattern was that of one formal and one informal arrangement; the third was one informal arrangement only while the fourth was that of two formal arrangements (Table 7).

TABLE 7 in here

As a result of the predominance of contact children who used only one type of formal care, the particular types of formal care used by our total sample of children obviously reflect to a great extent the services through which they were contacted.

One of the most striking features of the use of multiple arrangements was that the combinations of care used wereextremely diverse. For example, family day care may be combined with care by relatives, full day pre-school (community) with a paid baby sitter, neighbourhood children's centre with care by relatives, long day care (commercial) with family day care, long day care (community) with sessional pre-school, full day pre-school (commercial) with occasional care, etc. There were no common combinations. However, of the 24 children using 2 formal arrangements only, one half combined occasional care with another formal service which usually constituted the main arrangement.

3. Types of Care Used

Of all formal care arrangements used, the most frequently used was occasional care (13.9%), followed closely by community-based long day care (13.4%), and then community-based full day care (13.0%). Family day care (11.8%) was next, followed by community-based sessional pre-school (10.5%). There were 11 other types of care used, with frequency usage of 8.4 per cent or lower (full details of the usage of formal care are shown in Table 8).

TABLE 8 in here

Of all informal arrangements, care provided by relatives was used most frequently (32.1%), and then care by a paid babysitter (24.0%) and by the spouse of the person responsible (22.7%).

4. Variations in Care

(a) Variations by Age of Child

The most frequently used type of formal care by children aged less than 3 years was occasional care (28.8%) followed by family day care (25.4%) and community based long day care (22.0%). The types of formal care used by children 3 years to school age were more diverse (and probably reflecting the different regulations governing use of services and the actual level of provision). However, the most frequently used type of service was community based full day care (18.3%), followed by community based sessional pre-school (14.8%).

TABLE 9 in here

The 3 years to school age group tended to use informal care twice as much as the 0- less than 3 year group.

(b) Variations By Workforce Status of Mother and Family Size

As might be expected, the number of care arrangements used by parents increased with family size. However, within that it was the workforce participation of the mother (or single father) which was associated with the use of a larger number of care sources (Table 10). When the types of care used are examined it can be seen that employed mothers (single fathers) were more likely than those who were not employed to package formal and informal care (Table 11).

TABLES 1C and 11 in here

Again, the details on the specific types of care used by the employment status of the mother (single father) are contained in our main report. The data on this indicate that children use a diversity of forms of care, regardless of whether or not their mother (single father) is in the labour force.

Although children of employed mothers (single fathers) tended to use family day care and long day care (commercial and community) more than children whose mothers were not in paid work, they did use other forms of care such as sessional pre-school and occasional care. In fact, a third of children using each of the latter two services had mothers in the workforce. Of the 11 children with employed mothers using occasional care, 2 used it while their mother was working. Of the 8 such children using sessional pre-school, 6 used it while their mother was working.

Again, contrary to expectations, while the majority of children whose mothers were not in the workforce used sessional pre-school, full day pre-school (commercial or community) and occasional care, they, too, used an overall variety of care forms. For example, they constituted one quarter of children using family day care and over one-fifth of children using long day care centres (commercial and community based).

WHY DID FAMILIES USE CHILD CARE?

The parents in our survey indicated that they wanted to use some type of formal child care provision whether or not the mother was employed. Most families felt that not only did it enable the parent(s) to work but that it provided the parent(s) and the child(ren) with a break from each other. Just as important as parent-centred reasons for using child care, were child-centred centres —parents felt that the formal service provided company for their child and a more stimulating environment than could be provided at home. Sixty-eight per cent of all families stated they used child care arrangements and particularly formal care to meet the child's needs, while 48 per cent of families mentioned the importance of child care in enabling the mother (or single father) to work. Thirty-five per cent of all families gave as the reason for use of child care arrangements the need to give the mother (and often the child) a break. Families where the mother worked gave similar reasons relating to the child's needs, 77 per cent gave reasons relating to work and 18 per cent gave reasons relating to a need for mother to have a break (Table 12).

TABLE 12 in here

CHANGES WANTED

The question on desired changes in the provision and/or type of services available was asked in order to find out whether such patterns of care as the parents used were the result of choice or lack of viable alternatives. The data we collected on choice suggests that families fall into three main groups :

- those that are content with their arrangements, whatever they are, because they have had so many problems in obtaining child care in the past.
- those who see child care as an "extra" which, while beneficial for their child,was not seen as essential to family functioning.
- those wanting modifications to existing arrangements or different arrangements altogether, for a variety of reasons.

We have not, at the time of writing this paper, completed our analysis of different arrangements wanted. However, we are able to present information on the modifications to existing arrangements that were mentioned. These data are given in Table 13.

TABLE 13 in here

The types of modification most often mentioned were those leading to increased flexibility of care arrangements, particularly formal care arrangements. From our data there appearsto be a number of reasons which were frequently cited for wanting such changes. These were

- the problems encountered in trying to put together the package of care necessary to meet a family's needs, no one particular source being sufficient.
- the difficulties of managing care, especially if there was more than one child, e.g. co-ordinating care and work arrangements which may be located in different places, neither of which is near home.
- finding care for more than one child, especially if one of the children was under 3 or a school age child.
- the need to have flexible care arrangements that could be adapted as family circumstances changed.

The common factor in most of the desired changes, especially the wish for greater flexibility in services is the changing needs of families. Families' needs are not static —they change as parental employment changes, additional children are born,etc. When a mother leaves the workforce, perhaps on a temporary basis, for example, she may wish to keep her other child(ren) in long day care centre so that the child may continue to benefit from that experience, but the need may be for shorter hours. Changing family circumstances inevitably alter child care requirements over time and the prospect of adapting care to take account of altered situations is a daunting one for many parents.

The problems of menagement and co-ordination of care are major issues for parents as evident in the multiple use of care arrangements.

SIGNIFICANCE OF FINDINGS

The sample of 156 families in our study was drawn from the families who used formal child care services in five areas of diverse socio-economic status in the Sydney metropolitan area. The sample was drawn from the users of all types of formal child care services in each area and thus (although not arrived at through a random selection) can be regarded as a wide cross-section of families who use formal child care services. The demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the families in the sample, when compared with those identified in other studies of the users of formal child care services (e.g. King and Wyllie, 1981); Deagan et al., 1981) suggest that this is a case.

The importance of child care services in the lives of those families was evident from the extent to which they were using the services and from the reasons they gave for their use. The reasons for usage were diverse but can be broadly related to three kinds of needs : parents' needs, child's needs, and family needs.

Parents' needs were often related to their work, especially to mothers' employment, but this was not the only reason. Other reasons were given, such as the need to have a break from parenthood, to study, or to engage in sporting or social activities, were also mentioned. However, mother's employment was a significant factor, irrespective of whether mother worked for economic reasons or for personal fulfilment.

It is important to note that working mothers (especially single parents) used child care services not only at times when they were at work but also when they were not at work. This they found necessary to do so as to be able to attend to other tasks, such as shopping, visiting a doctor, or to any other activity, or to take a rest. This was particularly the case with mothers who worked shift work and needed to sleep during the day and with those who worked on weekends. It is not surprising, therefore, that the most frequently mentioned need for change in the provision of services was the need for greater flexibility of service.

Most parents saw child care services meeting the needs of their children in a positive sense, that is, as enhancing the child's personal and social development. Some parents felt that they were not able to meet the developmental needs of the child by themselves, either because they were not equipped to do so, or they lacked the time to spend with the child, or children. Thus they saw child care services as supplementing or complementing their own care. This was evident from the emphasis some parents gave to the need for a good quality care. Even when informal care arrangements were available to some of them, such as care by relatives, they preferred the formal, structured programmes in a day care centre or a pre-school. With regard to the type of care, the majority of parents in the sample wanted a child care place which would benefit the child in terms of providing stimulation, companionship and socialisation. On that score, parents did not seem to differentiate between day care centres and pre-schools.

Child care services were also used to meet the needs of the family unit, such as the need for the parent(s) to have time to attend to the needs of other children who were at home or at school. The use of services for one child thus allowed the parent(s) to perform and co-ordinate the tasks related to the other members of the family unit.

The majority of children in the sample who used child care services experienced only one type of care. For those who experienced more than one type of care the range of types of care were sometimes quite diverse. However, the diversity and complexity of care arrangements was revealed when they were analysed for the family as a unit (Tables 10 and 11), and even more so when the activities of the family were examined over a period of a week. One day of the week was often not the same as another, and the arrangements for child care would vary accordingly. The complexity of arrangements for care were greater in those families where both parents worked, where parents (or either of them) worked shift work or irregular hours, or where either of them worked on weekends. Again, the complexity increased in families with more than one child. The following case studies illustrate some of these complexities.

1 child family:

— 2 parent family. Father works full-time. Mother works 9-5, 3 days a week and 9-2, 2 days a week doing 2 jobs. Child attends Long Day Care Centre (community) for 2 days a week and a Sessional Pre-School 2 days a week. On the remaining day mother takes child to work with her or occasionally leaves child with a friend.

2 child family:

- Single father (no other adults in the household). The father has a job which always involves some evening hours, although the amount varies, and frequent weekend work. The children both attend school. They go from school to an After-School Programme and on from there to Family Day Care from which the father picks them up. When the father works at the weekend he uses a regular network of Friends to provide care for the children.

- 2 parent family. Father works full-time. Mother works part-time, 3 days a week, with flexible hours. The children attend a Neighbourhood Children's Centre for 2 of those days (the most days their mother could obtain) and on the remaining day a Relative cares for the children.

- 2 parent family. Mother works full-time with set hours, father works full-time but has flexible hours. The younger child attends Family Day Care for 4 days and is cared for by the Father on the fifth day. The older child goes to a Full Day Pre-School (community) for 3 days, to Family Day Care for one day and is cared for by the Father on the fifth day. The parents prefer family day care for younger children and the stimulation of centre care for older children. The older child is in the process of transition from one form of care to the other.

- 2 parent family. Father works full-time. Mother works one day a week, 9-3, and attends University part-time. The younger child goes to a Full Day Pre-School (community) 3 days a week (on one of which the mothers works), an Occasional Care Centre for 3 hours on one day and is cared for by a Private Minder for 2 hours on the fifth day. The older child attends school. On one day a week both children are in the care of a Paid Neighbour for 3 hours after school hours.

3 child family:

- 2 parent family. Mother works part-time, 5 days a week plus 1 evening a week and 1 weekend in 4. Father works full-time. There are 4 children. The youngest is cared for by a Relative, who lives some distance away, 5 days a week. The second youngest is also cared for by that Relative but only on 3 days, on the remaining 2 the child attends a Full Day Pre-School (community). The oldest 2 children attend school. Father cares for the children when Mother is working outside of normal hours.

- 2 parent family. Mother works part-time on a rotating shift spread over 7 days. Father is self-employed. There are 3 children none of whom attends school. All 3 children use a Multi-Purpose Children's Centre (this centre is classified as a Neighbourhood Children's Centre in our tables) and a Hospital Based Child Care Centre on a regular basis but with variations in hours. Care at other times when mother is working is provided by Father, if not working himself, or a Friend.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PROVISION FOR SERVICES

Because the findings presented in this paper have come from, as yet, uncompleted analysis of our study, we limit our comments on the implications for the policy on children's services to those aspects of services which stand out clearly at this stage of analysis. These are: the wide variety of reasons why parents use child care services; and the changing needs of families over a period of time. The first aspect has a bearing on the types of services provided; the second, on the flexibility of services with regard to the time of the day (or night) the service is available, or the time of the week.

Parents use child care services for a wide variety of reasons. The reasons do not fit into neat, discrete categories; they are determined by the needs of parents as well as by the parents' perception of their children's needs. There may be a range of needs in one family, especially in a family with more than one child. Thus parents seek to reconcile these needs by seeking a type of service which best fits their range of needs. The result is often an unsatisfactory compromise. Often, parents have no choice in the type of service they need and use only the service that is available to them.

By contrast, services are classified into certain types, each with defined hours of operation, content and priority of access. The reasons for these divisions are partly historical, especially the division between pre-school kindergartens and day care services.

Pre-schools were first established in the depression of the 1890s for the social reform of working class children. Later, they were established by middle class parent groups for their own children. These programmes became accepted as "developmental" and in many States are still supported under the auspices of education departments. It is commonly believed that these services are used by the children of "women at home" (and to some extent the data substantiate that view). Day care, providing extended hours care for the children of employed working class mothers, was first set up in the early 1900s. However, during the post-war period the number of women in the workforce substantially increased and middle class women had come to use commercial and later government supported day care centres. Ever since then there has been an assumption that day care (as opposed to pre-school) is or ought to be used by the children of working women.

New forms of services have been developed in recent years, again with the assumption that certain groups of children (or women) ought to use them in certain ways. Occasional care is an example of this. The concept of occasional care, as proposed by the Social Welfare Commission (1974), was that this service would provide supervision for the children of women at home who needed care on irregular basis. Since children would not be used to being away from home, their time spent in this form of substitute care ought to be limited. Other types of services have since come into operation, but the categorisation into types, each with different regulations, funding formulae, etc. still prevails. A reconsideration of the types of service with the aim of making the services more compatible with the pattern of usage and the reasons for usage seems therefore to warrant urgent attention.

The issue of flexibility is more problematic. Our study indicates clearly the diverse nature of parents' needs for child care, and the changing nature of needs, from one day to another as well as over a longer period of time. This diversity of needs is at present not easily met by the structure of services with rigidly defined types of service, hours of operation and priorities of access.

The hours of operation are, by and large, confined to day time. However, a number of parents in our sample (especially women) worked irregular hours, shift work, and on weekends. It may be expected that with such trends as the extension of shopping hours and the growthof service industry and community services the demand will grow for child care services at irregular hours —in the evenings and on weekends. To meet that demand, services would have to be provided on the basis of 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Although such extension of child care services is feasible, it also raises a number of issues: where to provide them, who should provide them, at what cost and on what conditions.

Whether the expectations of universal child care services provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week, can be met, or whether they should be met, is a question of policy. The issue can be argued on the grounds of parents' needs, children's needs, and family needs, and also on the grounds of economic interests of certain groups in society, or on national interests. Is is also a question of political philosophy; that is, how far do the obligations of the state extend towards the family or towards the children —both as children and as future adults. Now, that there are again some signs of positive commitment in the Federal sphere towards the extension of children's services and towards an extension on a planned basis and more equitable basis, these questions warrant consideration in the formulation of policy.

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APPENDIX: STATISTICAL TABLES

TABLE 1: SERVICE TYPES SURVEYED

Service Type	No. surveyed
Family Day Care Scheme	5
Full Day Pre-School -commercial	7
Full Day Pre-School -community	8
Long Day Care Centre -commercial	5
Long Day Care Centre -community	6
Neighbourhood Children's Centre	4
Occasional Care Centre	6
Sessional Pre-School	8
Total	49

TABLE 2: SAMPLE BY SERVICE TYPE OF CONTACT

Service Type	Contact Families		Contact Children	
	N	%	N	%
Family Day Care	20	12.8	28	14.3
Full Day Pre-School -commercial	11	7.1	12	6.2
Full Day Pre-School -community	29	18.6	30	15.4
Long Day Care Centre -commercial	12	7.7	12	6.2
Long Day Care Centre -community	24	15.4	31	15.9
Neighbourhood Children's Centre	19	12.2	29	14.9
Occasional Care Centre	16	10.2	26	13.3
Sessional Pre-School	25	16.0	27	13.8
Total	156	100	195	100

TABLE 3: PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS(1)

Educational Qualifications	Sample 1982				Census 1981:NSW	
	Mothers		Fathers		Women	Men
	N	%	N	%	%	%
Degree (incl. 2nd & higher degrees)	32	21.0	34	26.1	3.0	5.7
Other Tertiary (Diploma, etc.)	21	13.8	9	6.9	4.0	3.0
Trade, Technical, etc.	15	9.9	24	18.5	12.1	24.6
Total post-secondary	68	44.7	67	51.5	19.1	33.3
Higher School Certificate	24	15.8	27	20.8	N/A	N/A
School Certificate or below	60	39.5	33	25.4	N/A	N/A
Total without post-secondary	84	55.3	60	46.2	71.4	58.5
Not clear/Not stated	-	-	3	2.3	9.6	8.2
Total	152	(100)	130	(100)	(100)	(100

(1) Data from 1981 Census refer to persons 15 years of age and over but excludes persons who were still attending school

TABLE 4 : OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS OF PARENTS

Occupational Group	Sample 1982				Census 1981(NSW)	
	Fathers		Mothers		Men	Women
	N	%	N	%	%	%
Professional, technical, etc.	38	30.2	34	41.5	11.7	16.4
Administrative, executive, managerial	6	4.8	2	2.4	7.0	1.7
Clerical	13	10.3	28	34.1	8.4	34.0
Sales	16	12.7	4	4.9	6.8	11.3
Farmers, fishermen, timber-getters, etc.	-	-	-	-	6.3	3.5
Miners, quarrymen, etc.	-	-	-	-	1.1	-
Transport and communication	9	7.1	1	1.2	6.8	1.8
Tradesmen, process workers, labourers	23	18.3	2	2.4	40.2	9.2
Service, sport, recreation	5	4.0	9	11.0	5.5	13.0
Armed services	3	2.4	-	-	1.5	0.2
Inadequately described/not stated	13	10.3	2	2.4	4.7	8.9
Total	126	100.0	82	100.0	100.0	100.0

TABLE 5: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE

Age (in whole years)	Contact Children		Siblings of Contact Children		All Children	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Under 2	25	12.8	23	16.7	48	14.4
2	24	12.3	11	8.0	35	10.5
3-5 (not at school)	141	72.3	15	10.9	156	46.9
5-11(at school)	5	2.6	89	64.5	94	28.2
Total	195	100	138	100	333	100

TABLE 6: NUMBER OF CARE ARRANGEMENTS USED BY CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE

Number of Arrangements	Children	
	N	%
0	104	31.2
1	164	49.3
2	51	15.3
3	11	3.3
4	2	0.6
5	-	-
6	1	0.3
Total	333	100

TABLE 7: PATTERNS OF USAGE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE

Type of Arrangement		Children	
Formal N	Informal N	N	%
1	0	144	62.9
2	0	19	8.3
3	0	1	0.4
0	1	20	8.7
0	2	2	0.9
1	1	30	13.1
2	1	7	3.1
1	2	3	1.3
2	2	1	0.4
1	3	1	0.4
3	3	1	0.4
Total		229	100

TABLE 8:

Sources of all formal care arrangements used by children in the sample aged 11 or under

Source of formal arrangement	Children using	
	%	N
Occasional Care	13.9	33
Long Day Care : community	13.4	32
Full Day Care : community	13.0	31
Family Day Care	11.8	28
Sessional Pre-school : community	10.5	25
Neighbourhood Children's Centre	8.4	20
Long Day Care : private	5.5	13
Pre-school : type unspecified	5.5	13
Full Day Care : private	5.5	13
Multi-purpose Children's Centre	4.2	10
Playgroup	4.2	10
Hospital Child Care Centre	1.3	3
After School Care : formal source unspecified	1.3	3
Home Based Education Scheme	0.8	2
Special School for children with handicaps	0.4	1
Formal Arrangement : unspecified	0.4	1
Total of children using	100	238*
Total of children	-	207

* The number of children using is greater than the number of children because a child can use more than one formal child care arrangement.

TABLE 9: SOURCES OF ALL FORMAL CARE ARRANGEMENTS USED BY CHILDREN IN THE SAMPLE AGED 11 OR UNDER BY AGE OF CHILD

Source of formal arrangement	Age of Child								All Children	
	Less than 2	2	Less than 3		3 to school age		School age			
	N	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
Occasional Care	9	8	28.8	17	9.5	16		-	13.9	33
Long Day Care : community	5	8	22.0	13	11.2	19		-	13.4	32
Full Day Care : community	-	-	-	-	18.3	31		-	13.0	31
Family Day Care	10	5	25.4	15	6.5	11		2	11.8	28
Sessional Pre-school : community	-	-	-	-	14.8	25		-	10.5	25
Neighbourhood Children's Centre	3	3	10.2	6	7.1	12		2	8.4	20
Long Day Care : private	-	2	3.4	2	6.5	11			5.5	13
Pre-school : type unspecified	-	1	1.7	1	7.1	12		-	5.5	13
Full Day Care : private	-	-	-	-	7.7	13		-	5.5	13
Multi-purpose Children's Centre	-	1	1.7	1	6.1	7		2	4.2	10
Playgroup	1	2	5.1	3	4.1	7		-	4.2	10
Hospital Child Care Centre	-	1	1.7	1	1.2	2		-	1.3	3
After School Care : formal source unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-		3	1.3	3
Home Based Education Scheme	-	-	-	-	1.2	2		-	0.8	2
Special School for children with handicaps	-	-	-	-	0.6	1		-	0.4	1
Formal Arrangement : unspecified	-	-	-	-	-	-		1	0.4	1
Total formal arrangements used	28	31	100	59	100	169		10	100	238
Total of children using at least 1 formal arrangement	27	26	-	53	-	146		8	-	207
Non users of formal arrangements	21	9		30		10		86		126
All children in age group	48	35		83		156		94		333

TABLE 10: TYPE OF CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY FAMILY SIZE AND MOTHER'S (SINGLE FATHER'S) EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Type of Arrangements by family	1 child 11 or under		2 children 11 or under		3 or more children 11 or under	
	Employed Mother (single father) N	Mother not employed N	Employed Mother (single father) N	Mother not employed N	Employed Mother (single father) N	Mother not employed N
Both formal & informal	1	-	15	3	12	1
Formal only	24	11	18	34	15	21
Informal only	-	-	1	-	-	-
Total of families	25	11	34	37	27	22

TABLE 11: NUMBER OF CARE ARRANGEMENTS BY FAMILY SIZE AND MOTHER'S (SINGLE FATHER'S) EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Number of Arrangements by family	1 child 11 or under		2 children 11 or under		3 or more children 11 or under	
	Employed Mother (single father) N	Mother not employed N	Employed Mother (single father) N	Mother not employed N	Employed Mother (single father) N	Mother not employed N
1	23	9	18	24	5	13
2	2	2	12	8	7	5
3+	-	-	14	5	15	4
Total families	25	11	34	37	27	22

TABLE 12: WHY DID PARENTS DECIDE TO USE SOME FORM OF CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENT?

Reasons given	All families		Families in which mother (single father) is employed	
	% of responses	% of families mentioning	% of responses	% of families mentioning
To meet the CHILD'S NEEDS	43.1	68.2	33.1	49.4
—for companionship	15.5	24.5	12.9	19.3
—for stimulation/general development	9.6	15.2	8.9	13.3
—for socialisation/ independence	7.5	11.9	4.8	7.2
—for preparation for school/early education	6.7	10.6	4.0	6.0
—for special attention, e.g. when child has a handicap	3.8	6.0	2.4	3.6
To enable MOTHER (single father) to WORK	30.1	47.7	51.6	77.1
—reason for working unspecified	20.1	31.8	34.7	51.8
—for economic reasons	6.7	10.6	11.3	16.9
— to further career	2.1	3.3	3.2	4.8
— to have an outside interest	1.2	2.0	2.4	3.6
To provide MOTHER with TIME	22.2	35.1	12.1	18.1
—to have a break from motherhood	9.2	14.6	4.8	7.2
—to preserve mother's mental health	6.3	9.9	4.8	7.2
—to study	2.5	4.0	1.6	2.4
—to do tasks/activities like shopping/sport	2.5	4.0	0.8	1.2
—to spend time with older children	1.7	2.6	-	-
Other	4.6	7.3	3.2	4.8
TOTAL	100	-	100	-
BASE	239	151	124	83

TABLE 13: MODIFICATIONS WANTED TO EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS

Areas requiring modification	% of responses	% of families mentioning
Flexibility, e.g., -longer hours -more flexible hours/days -vacation care -occasional care -emergency care	42.2	59.8
Fees, e.g., -lower fees -not to pay when child sick/not using -not to pay by term -no higher fees for 0-3 year olds	33.6	47.6
Program and Facilities, e.g., -more educational/multicultural content -more parental involvement -more staff -more toys and equipment -more space -better design	19.8	28.0
Location, e.g., -closer to home -better transport access	4.3	6.1
Total	100	-
Base	116	82

Implications of language use and language policy for members of non-english speaking families in Australia

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INTRODUCTION

Systematic study of the consequences of increased heterogeneity in Australian society, particularly since 1947 and with migration as a major factor, has accelerated since the early 1970's. There are bodies of public knowledge on the migration and settlement experiences of various ethnic groups and individuals, (see, for example, Martin, 1965; Kunz, 1975; Johnston, 1979) on the reactions of immigrant families and their children to schooling in this country (see, for example, De Lemos, 19[illegible]4; Taft and Cahill, 1978; Marjoribanks, 1980), on cultural similarities and differences among ethnic groups (Huber, 1977; Bottomley, 1979; Mackie, 1983), to name just a few of the emphases in the literature.

The issue of dominant and minority languages is another aspect of life in contemporary Australian society which is a particular focus of interest. This is due partly to the current parliamentary consideration of the case for a national language policy (National Language Policy Conference Report, 1982), to the role language plays in mainstream and 'ethnic' schooling (Smolicz, 1982) and to the importance of language and culture maintenance among people of non-English origin (Foster, Lewis, and Rado, 1980). Many of the perspectives taken on the nature and relationships of languages in a multicultural society, however, are less than adequately informed and may, in fact, be based on erroneous assumptions.

The nature and functioning of languages in contact with one another are poorly understood in the Australian context. Because of this, observed phenomena such as the fact that some students of non-English background achieve less highly in schooling than their Anglo-Austalian counterparts, are explained in simplistic ways. For this example, the explanation may rest solely on school language. The diagnosis presented is that the student's school performance will improve with more knowledge of English, hence the solution is the provision of migrant or special English frequently in a withdrawal situation, discouragement of use of the ethnic language and often, no provision for continued learning in the ethnic language. On the other hand, the parents may be blamed for holding unrealistic expectations. That is, the preferred diagnosis is that non-English speaking parents must realize that their children cannot aspire to completion of secondary schooling and entrance to tertiary studies because they lack competence in English. The pragmatic solution is suggested in terms such as the following: If these students cannot adapt to Australian schools, they should be encouraged to leave.

Research studies with a focus on language have tended to examine students and families in isolation from one another and from the educational arena. It is only in some very recently published work that schools themselves have come under scrutiny. The effects of institutions (schools) and their ideologies on their clients (students and parents) as described and discussed by Martin and Meade (1979, 1981, 1981) and Connell et al. (1982) are beginning to undermine the previously dominant line of research which tended to 'blame the victim'.

In our research, we have sought to view schools, families and students as existing in an interdependent relationship. This has meant that even with variations in theme, our studies of educational aspects of multiculturalism have gathered data on all three sets of actors (teachers, parents and students) within the institutional contexts of school and home. Additionally, our research has pursued a particular focus which seeks to highlight the systematic study of sociolinguistic data with respect to bilinguals in the Australian setting.

The study from which the present paper is drawn arises out of this sociolinguistic orientation. It was conducted in 1981-1982 with a group of year 7 to year 9 bilingual students and their families in Melbourne. The language groups were: Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Vietnamese and Croatian. Both survey and case study techniques were employed to gather data from students, teachers and parents. Broad issues addressed in the study included: language maintenance within the family and its implications for inter- and intra-generation communication, and for relationships between family and school and the implications of family based bilingualism for career aspirations and for school expectations of bilingual youth. An extensive report documenting the implications of the research for school systems and individual schools as well as for the families of bilingual children is presently being prepared (Foster, Rado, Lewis, forthcoming, 1983)

A more specific issue also addressed by the study was the nature, functioning and consequences of 'cross-talk' and the incidence and extent of 'interlanguage' for the cognitive and linguistic development of bilingual children, for relations of authority and power in the family and for language and content learning in school. It is this issue which provides the topic for the present paper. Given the complexity of the issue, only one aspect has been presented here, that is, social and educational advantages, disadvantages and implications of the types of language role models and environments provided by 'migrant' parents.

Given this background, the remainder of the paper falls into two parts. The first consists of an examination of the linguistic and social significance of family conversations as one exemplar of communication between 'migrant' parents and their children. The concepts of cross-talk and interlanguage are identified, explored by utilizing a theoretical framework developed originally by Faerch and Kasper, and illustrated by examples taken from the speech of the parents of non-English speaking background students interviewed in the study. The final part of the paper outlines some of the social, linguistic and educational implications of the presence of interlanguage in the family context of Australian bilinguals.

Linguistic and Social Significance of Family Conversations

In Australia we have a dominant language, namely English and over 100 minority languages including the languages of our Australian Aboriginal population and those of immigrants with a non-English-speaking background. In this paper the terms dominant language variety or English will be used for the former and minority language variety or ethnic language for the latter. Because of the data available, the focus here will be on immigrant families who use more than one language variety in their daily lives, namely English and an ethnic language. Members of these families will be referred to as bilinguals irrespective of their bilingual competence. In other words, they will be considered bilinguals even if in one of their languages they only demonstrate receptive skills.

The study of bilingual language use is complex. It includes the alternation of different language varieties and the characteristic features of these varieties. The data are potentially very rich, but their collection and analysis are extremely time consuming. One way of solving this problem is to make some impressionistic observations, formulate hypotheses concerning the cause and effect of these phenomena and then proceed with systematic verification. Although this procedure has been adopted here, the analysis of data serving as a background to this paper has not been completed.

Therefore, the findings are tentative and can serve as illustration rather than proof. In other words, the methodology adopted is a case study approach, and as such can furnish signposts for the direction studies on family bilingualism can take.

In order to gain an overview of the predictable language use of bilingual migrant families, the following broad categories might be useful. These specifically refer to communication between parents and children. Interaction between other members of the nuclear and extended family, notably between siblings, and between siblings and grand parents, deserves a separate study and will not be discussed here.

Observed patterns of language use between parents and children are:

A. the exclusive and reciprocal use of the ethnic language;
B. the reciprocal use of both English and the ethnic language;
C. non-reciprocal use of the ethnic language or cross-talk, that is the parents use the ethnic language and the children answer in English;
D. the exclusive and reciprocal use of English.

The classification scheme offered here is a broad one in that it does not specify the language varieties used, namely standard language versus dialect or the proportion of time occupied by the ethnic language and English in categories B and C. Nevertheless, it can serve as a guide for discussion which will focus on possible advantages and disadvantages.

A. Exclusive and Reciprocal Use of the Ethnic Language. If the parents consistently use the ethnic language with each other and their children and the latter reciprocate, the language environment of the home will be monolingual in character. In this situation ethnic parents can utilise, as mature speakers, the rich resources of their mother tongue. What matters here is that they are mature speakers. As such they can contribute to their children's language development irrespective of their literacy skills.

Parents contribute to their children's intellectual and linguistic development through family conversations. These help children to form everyday concepts, relations of these to other concepts and the linguistic forms to express them. The teaching role of parents usually begins from the moment of birth as parents tend to immediately engage their infants in conversations. At first they fully speak for the child, imagining and verbalising what the child feels or wants. Gradually, in response to the parents' utterances, the child begins to participate through vocalisation which is interpreted for him or her until full verbal participation is achieved by the child.

Conversations play an important role throughout the entire period of language development in various ways. One of the functions they fulfil is to teach the child how to construct a text or discourse. This they do in co-operation with their conversational partners. They learn how to make verbal exchanges contingent on each other including answers on questions, statements on statements and so forth. Gradually they are able to make their contributions to converstions more substantial as they develop the ability to understand and produce longer sequences which is one of the pre-requisites for learning to read and for understanding expository prose. This in turn is essential for reaping the full benefits of schooling with its implications for the future. Sequences of utterances need not be in the form of complete sentences, but they must make sense. In other words, they must be coherent. Coherence can be based on universally and culturally shared knowledge or pre-suppositions which need not find linguistic expression in the text.

For example:

Question: Did you finish primary school?
Greek father: There was a war on.

The correct interpretation of the interviewer that the parent has answered in the negative is based on the shared knowledge that wars often interrupt schooling. Without such knowledge the sequence does not make sense. With such knowledge the answer is more informative than a simple denial - 'No, I did not (finish primary school)', would have been because the reply 'There was a war on' simultaneously expresses a denial and gives an explanation. By doing two things at once it abbreviates the answer. Brevity is desirable in language as it lightens the processing load. Our perceptual apparatus is such that in listening and speaking we are under strict time constraints so that the shorter a message the more efficient its transmission should be. But brevity is also socially desirable. Grice (1975) believes that conversations are regulated by the co-operative principles of *quantity*, *duality*, *relations* and *manner*. One of the maxims under the category manner is *brevity*.

Coherence is a prerequisite of all spoken and written texts, cohesion is not. Nevertheless cohesion is a feature of most texts. Cohesion is a linguistic feature, it refers to those elements in the text which help to tie sentences together and thereby create texture. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976). Cohesion as such is a language universal, the cohesive devices used by different languages are specific. Cohesion facilitates the task of comprehension by lending unity to the text. For example, there are cohesive devices in English which help us to keep track of the discourse topic and indicate what is new or of particular significance. Familiarity with these devices is essential for the understanding of expository prose.

The assumption is that the reciprocal use of the ethnic language in the home will enable children to learn the cohesive devices of the language and so make expository prose in the ethnic language more accessible to them. This raises the question of the usefulness of a well developed ethnic language to Australian citizens. If a child is a social bilingual, in other words, if he or she belongs to a family that speaks a minority language then the full development of that language is essential according to the threshold and interdependence hypotheses. There is some evidence to support the view that in the case of social bilinguals proficiency attained in the first language can strongly influence success in second language acquisition. Further, a certain level of proficiency, a threshold, must be attained in a language if it is to serve as an efficient tool for school learning (see Cummins, 1978; 1979).

What these hypotheses tell us is that if children are bilingual their bilingualism will only prove an asset in their schooling if it is well developed. If this is not the case, it may well prove a hindrance. Since provisions for ethnic language development outside the home are usually limited, if not scant or totally absent, ethnic language maintenance in the home is of paramount significance and deserves encouragement.

B. Reciprocal Use of both English and the Ethnic Language.

The exclusive and reciprocal use of the ethnic language by parents and children implies that neither party gets practice in using English. Is the second pattern, therefore, more profitable for the children where both languages are used reciprocally at different times so the children can practise both languages? As has been shown, the ethnic language conversations offer profitable language practice, in contrast, the conversations in English often do not.

There is some evidence (Foster, Rado and Lewis, in preparation) that parents with a non-English speaking background who have had little or no formal schooling in Australia speak an 'interlanguage' even after a period of lengthy residence, namely over twenty years.

The term interlanguage is used by linguists to refer to the language of the second language learner. Selinker (1972) suggests that only about five per cent of second language learners achieve native-speaker competence, the utterances of the rest are often not identical with what the native speaker would have said had he attempted to express the same meaning. Selinker considers that the differences are due to processes central to second-language learning:

> first, language transfer; second, transfer-of-training; third, strategies of second-language learning; fourth, strategies of second-language communication; and fifth, overgeneralization of TL (target language) linguistic material. (p.215)

Selinker adds that interlanguage utterances can be associated with one or more of these, or other processes.

There is now fairly widespread support for the view (Corder, 1967; 1971; 1981; Nemser, 1971; Selinker, 1972; Schumann, 1975), that the that second language learners operate with a rule system which is partly their own personal system. Some of the rules are not the rules of either the first or the second language, they are idiosyncratic constructs of particular speakers. According to

Selinker, as learners gain in competence they adjust their rule system thereby reducing some of the deviant forms in their language. However, under certain conditions when the speakers might be off their guard, e.g. fatigue, stress or relaxation, deviant forms might re-appear. He calls such back-sliding in language competence, fossilisation.

It is important to stress that the significance of interlanguage does not lie in the deviant forms per se, but in the fact that they are the result of the rule system of an individual which in many respects is not shared by others. Yet language is not a private matter, language use is a social act based on shared knowledge and a shared linguistic rule system. So opposed to social dialects, Corder (1981) calls interlanguage varieties idiosyncratic dialects. Despite their idiosyncratic language, interlanguage users can communicate because they rely on shared knowledge, but they often bypass the shared rule system. by doing so, they hinder communication, less with family members who are used to this way of speaking, but certainly with outsiders.

The effects of the reduced communication capacity outside the home of non-English speaking migrants have been documented and discussed on many occasions. Some of the submissions to the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts on the development and implementation of a co-ordinated language policy for Australia (1982-33) are a recent source of information.

The areas where communication difficulties can create hardship for migrants include health, employment, the law and the various aspects of social services. In other words, migrants often can't share fully in the life of the Australian community. The two strategies that can be employed to remedy this situation should not be seen as alternatives, but as going hand in hand. One strategy is to offer greater opportunities to adult migrants for learning English and thereby bringing their interlanguage closer to the English spoken in the community. In other words, it has to be recognised that survival English is not enough. The second strategy is to provide interpreter and translation services in situations where miscommunication can seriously disadvantage migrants. It must be remembered, however, that the use of interlanguage has no cognitive consequences for adult speakers.

The situation of their children is different. Exposure, even if not constant exposure to the parents' interlanguage, places a burden on the children who are in the process of language development. We become mature speakers of a language in our early twenties rather than earlier (Labov, 1975). In an interlanguage environment, children who non-consciously observe language in order to develop it further must be able to reject not only the deviant forms, but also the underlying deviant rules they cannot fail to observe in their parents' speech. In a sense, they must learn to disregard linguistically much of what their parents say. This is not only cognitively but also emotionally difficult as it is in conflict with the usual assumption underlying family relations that parents know best.

It can be assumed that some children are more adept in ignoring the deviant forms in their parents' speech in that they don't adopt them themselves. We lack documentation on the relationship between the speech of migrant parents and their children. Some youngsters actively correct their parents' speech thereby perhaps gradually reducing the deviance of the interlanguage used and lightening their own filtering task by overtly replacing the ungrammatical forms by grammatical ones. One might be inclined to applaud this practice but there is another aspect to it. Ignoring what the parents say even if not in content at least in form may diminish parents in status, but does not change their role, whereas correcting parents is an act of role reversal with stronger implications for parental authority in the home.

The difficulty experienced by interlanguage speakers in expressing themselves can be illustrated by examples drawn from the protocols of migrant parents interviewed in 1982 in connection with an E.R.D.C. research project investigating success in school learning by some bilingual teenage students.

As deviant forms used by interlanguage speakers appear to be products of various communication strategies, these strategies can serve as a basis for analysing interlanguage.

> A working definition of communicative strategies is that they are a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty. Difficulty in this definition is taken to refer uniquely to the speaker's inadequate command of the language used in interaction.
>
> (Corder, 1983: 16)

It would be interesting to observe how much children help their parents not only by correcting but also by providing words, idioms and grammatical structures parents might require to complete their utterances. As conversations are co-operative acts one can assume that besides the co-operative principle applying to the speaker (Grice, 1975), there is also a receptive co-operative principle with its set of maxims (Faerch & Kasper, 1983a). One such maxim would be the obligation of face saving by the hearer vis-a-vis the speaker. (See Goffman 1969; Brown and Levinson, 1978). This maxim is ambivalent in that it may result in alternative courses of action. One of these could be the polite ignoring of the speaker's linguistic difficulties. The other could be giving assistance by providing the correct or missing linguistic elements. Of course, the extent to which children can repair their parents' speech depends on their own cognitive and linguistic abilities and the parents' willingness to accept help from them. If children assist they may well threaten their parent's face, that is harm their self-concept or image, and so affect personal relations in the home. If they don't, idiosyncratic forms are tacitly accepted or messages remain incomplete or are abandoned so that the children are not fully exposed to their parent's semantic universe. In other words, there is a reduced sharing of knowledge.

It is difficult to document missed opportunities. But some fairly well accepted facts about language might help to shed light on the linguistic information adults offer children. One probable storing and production device in handling the conceptual universe is to organize our knowledge of frequently encountered experiences including states, events, attitudes, opinions and values into stereotypical frames or scripts. These can be evoked to provide the necessary expressions to report, discuss or reflect on a certain topic and so facilitate both speaking and listening. It can be assumed that adult mother-tongue speakers have a great many frames available which they would use in talking to their children and so enrich the cognitive and linguistic world of the younger generation. As interlanguage speakers, such frames would be less accessible to them and therefore their conversations in interlanguage would be less informative with respect to frames, and would so constitute missed learning opportunities for the children.

One can investigate interlanguage phenomena by observing the communications strategies employed by its speakers. The following categorisation scheme has been adopted for this purpose:

Communication Strategies

Formal reduction strategies	Subtypes
Communication by means of a reduced system based on insufficiently automatised or hypothetical rules/items	phonological grammatical lexical

Functional reduction strategies	Subtypes
Reducing the communicative goal in order to avoid a problem	actional reduction/confusion: discourse/speech acts modal reduction: social distance/formality reduction of the propositional content: topic avoidance message abandonment meaning replacement

Achievement strategies	Subtypes
Solving communicative problems by attempting to expand communicative resources	code switching interlingual transfer generalisation paraphrase word coinage restructuring co-operative strategies

(Based on Faerch & Kasper, 1983b: 52-53).

Examples of selected communication strategies observed in migrant parents' interview protocols.

(1) Formal reduction strategy

(a) grammatical and (b) lexical.

Question: Do you have plans to return to Greece permanently

or do you intend to stay in Australia?

Greek Father: I love it holiday, come back again Australia.

The grammar and vocabulary of this answer is simpler and more limited than a native speaker would have used. The full form might have been:

> I would like to visit Greece for a holiday, but would come back again to Australia to live here permanently.

Question: Was Australia different from what you thought it would be?

Croatian Mother: Here beautiful, good, very good. There I stay my country not too much job, you know. But here more better.

Obviously this is a drastically abbreviated version of what the mother might have said had she expressed herself in her mother tongue. (During the greater part of this interview her son acted as an interpreter as she was replying to the questions mostly in Croatian)

(2) Functional reduction strategy

(a) Actional reduction/confusion/speech acts.

Question: Does Con help?

Greek Mother: very nice.

This elliptical answer seems to be intended as an approval of the boy's behaviour and so presupposes more than the question warrants. What would be appropriate here is a speech act of assenting or dissenting, e.g. Yes, (he helps), or No, (he doesn't). What the mother seems to imply is that the boy is very nice because he helps which is not a direct answer to the question. The new information the question sought was whether the boy helped and not what personal qualities he had. So the mother used an inappropriate speech act in responding to the question.

Another example is provided by the following dialogue:

Question: So you think the school could improve the standard?
Greek Father: That's all right.
Question: That's the change you would like to see?
Greek Father: That's all right.

In these consecutive question answer couplets, the Greek father's answers could be misunderstood if quoted out of context because he worded his speech acts of agreement in a way that English speakers use to express approval. Of course, it is also possible that he substituted 'that's all right' for 'that's right'. Whatever the reason this exchange illustrates how important it is to encode speech acts in such a way that their intended meaning is clear to the hearer.

(b) Actional reduction (discourse) in combination with (3) Achievement strategy: paraphrase.

Question: What would you like to be different in Australia?

Greek Father: You work 15 years and done some mistakes or something you know, they kick you out (in Australia). Yeah, without an explanation why they kick you out and that's no good. That's my opinion. I don't know what the other one's thinking and that's the other thing. They got medical cover there (Germany) and you don't have to pay anything. When you see a doctor or anything. Everything is free. What's everything, how they keep you here. You are in the union office all right, they keep you here immediately doctor fees, they get it out of your pay all time, if you're rich or not does not matter. You want to go to the doctor, no headaches, you just going there. You say I'm working there and I'm living there and that's just it.

This father did not have the complete English frames at his disposal in discussing issues of taxation and social security in Germany and Australia. Some of the missing items could have been 'union dues', 'health insurance/benefits', 'free medical care/entitlement', 'job security', 'arbitrary sacking'. These are expressions that would have been at the disposal of a mother-tongue speaker. This extract shows that the man had these concepts but lacked the English resources to express them so had to use a certain amount of circumlocution.

(c) Topic avoidance.

Question: Is it good or bad for Australia to have many Greek migrants?
Greek Father: I'm not sure about that.

The father's polite refusal to pursue the topic could have been due to the fact that he genuinely had no opinion to express but one might hazard the guess that he avoided the topic because he did not have the linguistic resources to deal with it.

(d) Message abandonment.

Question: What do you like best about Maria?
Greek Father: You make ... I can't find the word to tell you.
This father momentarily abandoned the topic.

After a false start this man re-phrased his message and conveyed his view of his daughter with the apparently limited vocabulary he had to describe personal characteristics. One may well wonder what he would have said had he been free of the constraints of interlanguage.

(e) Message abandonment and topic avoidance.

Question: What do you like about the ethnic customs?

Croatian Mother: Everything, because I do for my country,
cook or this or cake. I don't know what they
call anyway.

Here is an example of message abandonment. This mother had nothing more to say about her own culture.

Some parents avoided answering this question by simply replying "everything".

In contrast those with a better developed interlanguage had a great deal to say. The following extract is about one third of the full reply.

Spanish-speaking Mother: We have a different tradition because there
is also Chilean and Argentina. We also have in South-America
tradition from Indian people, also we have tradition from the
negro people, from Africa because the negro come from Africa
to North-America, Brazil and part of South-America. The
rhythm, the music is very beautiful and we have develop some
traditional dance from that Africa ....

(3) Achievement strategy

(a) Code switching.

Question: What do you like best about the Spanish customs and culture?

Spanish-speaking Mother: ... In the Uruguay club people dance candombe like a traditional. But really that rhythm come from Africa. It changed now a little bit but come from Africa. Those drums and also something from the Indian, el brujo, what's the name. They mix all together, el candombe, also we have tradition from Spain, the Spanish conqueror bring the tradition, el minuet ...

In this segment of speech, there are four examples of code switching, that is a Spanish word was introduced with Spanish pronunciation and on three occasions the Spanish definite article was retained.

(b) Co-operative strategy

Question: Is it good or bad for Australia to have many Greek migrants?

Greek Father: What are Greek migrants?

In this instance, the father actively sought to ascertain the meaning of the question so that the conversation could continue.

C. Non-Reciprocal Use of the Ethnic Language

The third pattern of language use is that of cross-talk when the parents speak in the ethnic language and the children reply in English. The effects of this type of interaction seem also to be negative. Children engaging in cross-talk miss out on the practice conversations offer in co-operatively building a text. They may well develop an over-reliance on shared knowledge and a disregard for the cohesive elements in language. Yet, cohesive devices are useful signposts in text comprehension and play a role in the understanding of expository prose which migrant children often find daunting to handle. The key to this difficulty might be a less familiarity with the rules of discourse rather than with the rules of grammar. In order to prove this point, the expository prose written by migrant children should be analysed for discourse structure and cohesion. In English the categories of cohesive devices are reference, substitution, ellipsis, lexical cohesion and in speech also intonation (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

Cross-talk also has the effect of weakening parental authority. It is a sign of failure on the parents' part to pass on their mother tongue to their children which is the norm. Although language and culture are not identical they are closely related and therefore the rejection by children of the parents' language has also cultural implications. It is imperative that parents offer their children a value system, in this they are helped by the observation of traditional customs. Without the mediation of the ethnic language this is more difficult. It is particularly difficult if, because of cross-talk, the children understand less and less of the ethnic language. Sometimes the parents' awareness of what has happened comes too late. In one Spanish speaking family interviewed the older brother often had to act as an interpreter between his parents and his younger sister. Everybody including the girl was unhappy about it, but the family was at a loss as to what to do. The father was intellectually alert and interested in music and politics. The daughter could have gained much from talking with him had she been able to accurately follow his thoughts and/or argue with him, confronting him with her own point of view. The opportunity for adolescents to argue intelligently is a powerful device in stimulating intellectual and language development.

D. The Exclusive and Reciprocal Use of English

Such interaction apart from exposing children to interlanguage may not hinder their own power of expression. However, as we have seen, parents using interlanguage often have difficulty in expressing themselves accurately and in developing a more complex argument.

The communication difficulties encountered by migrant parents when speaking to their children in English have been feelingly summarised by a Greek father.

> Greek Father: First of all, it's a ... we, we ... As I told you we are not very high educated, we can't explain

things which we feel in English. We can't explain them, we want them to understand. May be we go back to Greece, they will letters or besides we want to explain which we believe. It's about religion, about customs, all those things. We sometimes feel not good to translate them in English.

Here are heart felt reasons for maintaining the ethnic language in the home. However, there is also the desire to improve competence in the English language. As school-age children know a certain amount of English, some parents find them an easily available source for improving their English.

Greek Mother: My daughter explain many things, yeah, many words.

How children try to improve their parents' English is vividly described by one of them.

Greek daughter: If she says something she doesn't pronounce it very well.
I try to correct her. One of the main ones is "true". She says "through". "Mum, it's 'true'". She goes "No, 'through'".

Clearly one would not want to discourage parents from trying to learn English and their children from helping them, but perhaps more experienced language instructors are needed here. Many parents expressed the desire to learn English, but found the available courses inaccessible. Today the question is no longer what sort of courses and methodology are suitable for teaching adults English, but rather how to expand these services so that a wide range of needs and situations can be satisfied. Maximum flexibility in teaching hours and venues is of paramount importance here.

IMPLICATIONS

The content of this paper represents only one narrowly defined aspect of a broader research project into the factors contributing to language development of children in Australia with a non-English speaking background. We suggest that sociolinguistic research has a lot of potential for exploring the micro- and macro-social contexts in which Australians of all ethnic backgrounds live, whether such contexts are, at times, ethnically homogeneous or, at others, pluralistic.

We are conscious of the dangers of placing a higher value on this type of research and its findings than is warranted given the exploratory nature of much of our work at the present time. We are, however, willing to speculate on the implications of our work feeling confident that they provide a sound basis on which to build further research.

We suggest that the implications can be categorised as linguistic, educational and social. This is a somewhat artificial division, but is applied for heuristic purposes here. On another level, we suggest that the outcomes of this type of research have practical import for the actors in the social settings which have been researched. In this case, the social setting under scrutiny has been that of the language environment of the nuclear 'migrant' family. The implications briefly stated have been limited to those about which we feel most confident, given the actual findings expressed here and our professional experiences as teacher educators.

Linguistic:

Finding: The importance of family/parental conversations for children's intellectual and linguistic development. Crosstalk and interlanguage may interfere with the above, hence, parents might be encouraged to develop or maintain a rich monolingual 'ethnic' language home environment.

Implication: Linguistic awareness is not commonly or pervasively built into teacher education programs. And yet, the heterogeneity of school populations, at least, in the capital cities throughout Australia, introduces very many teachers to complexities in language use, cultural interchange and other aspects of teaching/learning contexts for which they are almost totally unprepared. The insights which can be gained by the kind of sociolinguistic research recounted above, disseminated widely, have the potential to modify radically the education of future teachers cognisant and competent to work effectively in the schools of a multicultural Australia.

Educational:

Finding: Where the family maintains a vital ethnic language environment, then the school can accept a major responsibility for developing the English language competence of bilingual students.

Implication: A diversity of English language programs and services should be made available to students and their parents, if, parents wish to avail themselves of opportunities to develop their English. Conversely, schools must be aware of the advantages of ethnic home language and adapt their programs and services to capitalize on this. For example, if the provision of community languages in schools (to be seen as a 'normal' part of the school curriculum) is facilitated, students of non-English speaking background may experience positive discrimination in this respect. Adequate interpreter and translation services should be available to help parents make closer links with the school.

Teachers need to understand the nature and advantages of bilingualism for their students, especially those from non-English speaking backgrounds. Such an understanding is likely to come only with well developed pre- and in-service teacher education. Linguistic training - both psycho- and socio-oriented and actual experience of learning another language would seem to be essential components of such courses.

Social:

Finding: Language use is a social act based on shared knowledge and a shared linguistic rule system. The presence of linguistic features which can be subsumed under the concept of interlanguage results in the bypassing of some of the linguistic rule systems of mother-tongue speakers. As a consequence, communication is hindered.

Implications: Such a situation has not only linguistic but also social disadvantages. Stigmatised speech among children (and adults) of non-English speaking background is readily distinguished by native speakers of English, even when they themselves use a lower status social dialect. These native speakers may accommodate stigmatised speech into a more generalised prejudice against those who are different. This phenomenon has received a deal of attention in the literature. Less widely recognised and discussed are social consequences within the family itself. Language use of the kinds we have described and discussed in the second section of this paper can lead to intergenerational tensions arising from changed perceptions of 'naturally' occurring and/or desired power and status relationships. Taken to its logical conclusion, one should support the use of the ethnic language in 'migrant' families as a way of avoiding unhappiness for adults and children alike.

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Negotiating an ethnic identity: The survivor's viewpoint

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THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS

This study has two general theoretical orientations which have as their common focus the interaction between 'ethnicity' and the organisation of education. The first orientation has been referred to as 'the migration experience' (MARTIN & MEADE : 1979: 6-7): The second theoretical strand is the general notion of 'ethnic identification'.

1. The Migration Experience:

For this study ' migration experience' is viewed as being essentially interactive. Much of the Australian literature on immigration has taken as its focus 'in-migration': that is, the study of migrants moving into a receiving society. Comparatively little attention has been given to the values, attitudes, beliefs, experiences and expectations migrants bring with them. The 'in-migration' perspective was considered to be both restrictive in scope and limiting in its ability to generate a greater understanding of the human experience of migration in general and the effects of this experience upon Australian education in particular.

Thus, one major emphasis for this study is an attempt to generate an understanding of the interaction between ethnically-based expectations and experiences of education and the institutionally-situated ideologies and practices. A second consideration is that an understanding of the migration experience requires an awareness of factors related to the motives for migration as well as those related to settlement in the receiving society. Consequently, our study is organized to generate and interpret data from three inter-related aspects of the migration experience:

(i) parental expectations and experiences of education prior to arrival in Australia,

(ii) parental expectations, experiences and evaluations of education during their period of residence in Australia, and,

(iii) the experiences of Australian education of a population of Greek Australian tertiary students.

2. Ethnic Identification:

A considerable body of literature exists which takes as its focus the general notion of 'ethnic identification'. FALK (1978) and HARRIS (1980) refer to the social psychological term 'identity' and distinguish between 'personal' and 'ethnic' identity. Wiseman (1979: 1980) utilizes BERGER and LUCKMANN'S concept of 'typification' to describe the various levels of identification which occur within the social category of 'ethnic'. In each case these writers are attempting to consider the impact on individuals of the social processes involved in the categorizing of people in our society as 'ethnic'.

Further, regardless of which orientation one takes, it is obvious that the education system is a major social categorizer. Until relatively recently, schools have been predominantly 'assimilationist' in ideology and in practice (SMOLICZ : 1971). As such schools so actively promulgated the values of Anglo-conformism that most non Anglo-Saxon children denied their ethnicity and Anglicized their names (name being an important element of identity) in a vain attempt to identify with the one valued ethnic group, the Anglo-Saxon. More recently, various attempts have been made to overcome some of the problems created by this ideology. Programs have been implemented to reinforce the ethnic identification of children both through the teaching of ethnic languages and culture, and in the use of various mother tongues as teaching mediums in bilingual programs. Thus, either from neglect (as in Anglo-conformist assimilation) or intent (as in pluralistic multi-culturalism) schools have been central to the process of ethnic identification.

WISEMAN (op cit) has studied ethnic identification in secondary schools. However, little or no research has been undertaken in tertiary institutions. A recent study (ANDERSON et al : 1980) of the impact of the abolition of fees for tertiary education in Australia totally ignores the significant ethnic dimension in Australian tertiary populations and refers loosely to 'Southern European': a meaningless category and one which denies both the diversity and the significance of generational factors within that category.

This study attempts to overcome the apparent neglect by tertiary institutions and researchers of the concerns of 'ethnic' students. Further, it is asserted that theorists of ethnic identification may well examine tertiary students - the survivors of Australian primary and secondary schools - in order to understand more fully the outcomes of negotiating an ethnic identity in Australian education systems.

Finally, the 'stunting' effect of migration upon individual's sense of identity referred to by MARTIN & MEADE (op cit : 6-7) and the fear expressed by HARRIS (op cit : 15) that negative socialisers (such as schools) will lower ethnic identification are refuted by at least one respondent in our study. When asked to describe in what terms he viewed other people he replied:

> *There are two categories of people : Greeks, and those wishing they were Greeks.*

THE STUDY

METHODOLOGY

The sample from which the data for this paper were derived was generated from the Greek-Australian students enrolled in the College. (A larger sample consisting of Italian-Australian as well as Greek-Australian respondents has been used in a wider study. These data have not been included in this paper because some difficulties have been encountered in translating and transcribing parental responses into English. Findings of this wider Study will be published separately.)

A letter was sent to all 'Greek' students - 'Greekness' was initially defined by the family name. A personnal approach was then made to all students to whom the initial letter was sent.

Interviews and other forms of data collection were conducted by a Greek-Australian recent graduate of the College. This method of data collection was selected because of the insights and rapport a researcher with this background could bring to the study.

Interviews were conducted in English and were semi-structured. This approach provided the interviewer with a flexibility to follow the dictates of the situation by probing some responses for more detailed information, or for clarification, and also encouraged the respondent to freely explore issues which are of personal interest. It also provided some control over the problem of comparability of data. A level of control has been achieved by developing a general interview schedule, consisting of the central concerns of the two theoretical orientations. This enabled the interviewer to ask core questions in a manner which was comparable in each interview.

The data generated were recorded and transcribed and consist of attitudes, opinions and experiences of the students, together with their interpretations of parental responses.

A small sub-sample of parents was also generated. The method was similar to that for the student population: a letter written in Greek was sent to the parents and a later personal approach was made. Considerable difficulty was experienced. Parents approached tended to be hesitant and frequently stated the opinion that they didn't think that they could provide any useful information because 'you are the experts'.

A small sample of four parents was interviewed. This sample is not considered to be necessarily representative of the total population. However, the data generated provide useful amplifications, confirmations and contradictions of the student responses.

These interviews were also semi-structured but were conducted in Greek and the responses translated and transcribed into English.

Thus, the data generated by this study are of two kinds. That derived from analysis of ABS censuses and College records is quantitative. So too is the biographical data collected during the interview sessions. By far the greatest proportion of data is qualitative. Approximately 50 hours of interviews have been recorded, transcribed and organized according to the demands of the theoretical orientation of the study. It is to an analysis and interpretation of these varied data that we now wish to turn.

THE SAMPLE

(a) THE STUDENTS:

Table 1 indicates that Greek-Australians constitute approximately 6% of the student population of Hartley CAE. Further, addition of the Italian-Australian Students (N=114) to this figure shows that approximately 1 : 5 of the students enrolled can be categorized as "ethnic".

Table 1 ETHNIC STUDENT ENROLMENTS

HARTELY CAE, 1980

Greek-Australians*	53	
Italian-Australians	114	
Total Student Enrolments		933

*Full-time teacher education Courses

The Sample chosen for this study was 17 (that is 1:3 of the Greek-Australian population). It consisted of 8 males and 9 females. Table 2 shows the distribution of the Sample by year of Course and by sex.

Table 2 SAMPLE BY YEAR OF COURSE AND SEX

	MALE	FEMALE	N
Year 1	1	2	3
Year 2	4	1	5
Year 3	1	5	6
Exit Students	2	1	3
	8	9	17

It is important to note that the sex distribution of the Sample is not representative of the total Greek-Australian population of the College. In this larger population there are 13 males and 40 females. One possible explanation of the disproportionate number of males in the Sample is the hesitancy expressed by many female students when approached to participate in this aspect of the Study. Conversely, male students are particularly keen to participate and to voice their opinions forcefully. Finally, male Greek students appear to be far more active and assertive in the normal student activities of the College. For example, the executive of the Ouzo Club (originally a Greek Student Club, but now more generally a Greek-Italian Club) is exclusively male. Greek-Australian female students attend Ouzo Club activities, but do not appear to be heavily involved in either their preparation or organization.

Table 3 shows the distribution by Course of both the total Greek-Australian population and the Sample.

Table 3 GREEK STUDENTS BY COURSE

Course	Total Greek	Sample	Total College
Early Childhood	5	1	207
Junior Primary	5	1	216
Upper Primary	39	11	522
Communication Studies	1	0	102

*Three students who had graduated from Teacher Education Courses in 1980 were included in the Sample.

Examination of Table 3 indicates that Greek-Australian students are over-represented in Upper Primary courses and under-represented in the two College courses preparing teachers to work with younger children.

It has been argued elsewhere that teaching, and particularly Junior Primary teaching, has become an increasingly female domain (e.g. COLLINS 1971: HARVEY 1978). Further, data derived from South Australian teachers indicate that women are highly segregated in those areas of teaching such as Junior Primary teaching which emphasize traditional femal sex-role related behaviours such as caring for the young and dependent: Teaching is, in this sense, is a sex-labelled occupation.

Why then are Greek-Australian students apparently refuting this tendency? Why are Greek-Australian female students for whom teaching is a higher status occupation than that of their parent's (see Table 8), choosing an area of teaching which is a-typical of other women teachers?

Analysis of data from sample respondents indicates that there are many possible explanations of these career choices. Firstly, four students indicated that their choice was based on a long-held desire to teach. However, in each case (all were women), parental and school encouragement was directed towards the perceived higher status work of Secondary and Upper-Primary teaching. One female respondent stated:

> *My mother was disappointed I came to College: she wanted me to go to university. College wasn't seen as high in status".*

Another female student stated:

> *I always wanted to be a teacher, not primary but secondary, but my parents were pleased that I came here - they were not very happy about me going to university.*

Other students indicated through their responses that their commitment to Primary teaching was based on the belief that Primary teaching offered a greater chance of gaining employment of completion of course than did other areas of teaching for example, one student stated:

> *I had always wanted to be a teacher. However, I decided to come to Hartley when I heard that Hartley had a higher percentage of exiting students getting jobs.*

When asked why she had specifically chosen Upper-Primary teaching she stated:

> *I suppose it was largely my parents. Greek parents consider that the older the children you teach, the higher your status. When I told them that at College we could choose between Upper and Junior Primary, they stated their preference. I suppose I felt a little that way too.*

Perceived greater employment opportunities offered to Primary graduates with specialisation in areas related to the education of ethnic children was also cited as a reason for entering Primary Teaching course. Many respondents indicated that their proficiency in Greek language and their knowledge of Greek culture were considered by them as increasing the likelihood of them receiving a teaching appointment of graduation. Further, it was anticipated that this appointment would be a in a metropolitan school and it would be in the general area of multi-cultural or ethnic education. Finally, this outcome was anticipated in these students' decisions to enrol in the courses both in the College and outside the College (e.g. Adelaide College of Arts and Education and D.F.E. Courses) which would improve their proficiency in Greek language. (12 of the 17 respondents were enrolled in Greek language courses).

Until 1980, there was considerable evidence that these expectations were valid. Exit students with both skills and experience in the general area of ethnic education gained metropolitan appointments in preference to mono-lingual, Anglo-Saxon students of comparable academic and teaching background. However, despite the recommendatons of a number of education reports (e.g. Schools Commission 1979: Auchmuty 1980) it appears that this apparent growth in multi-cultural education area has ceased and the associated tendency to positive discrimination for students with relevent skill will no longer exist. Thus, Greek-Australian students' expectations that their 'Greekness' will increase their chances of gaining an Upper Primary teaching position on completion of their courses will no longer be fulfilled. Patterns of course enrolment may well reflect the current areas of greatest employment opportunities which may or may not be in the Upper-Primary area.

(1) HOME ADDRESS

PRESDEE (1975) provides data which suggest that Hartley students tend to reside disproportionately in higher status suburbs. Using the ranking system described by STIMSON & CLELAND (1975), Presdee concludes that 49% of then Murray Park (now Hartley) students lived in the 50 highest ranked suburbs. TABLE 5 shows the comparative data for the Greek-Australian Sample attending the same college.

Table 4 STUDENT'S HOME ADDRESS - RANKED BY SUBURBS

SUBURB RANK	MURRAY PARK POPULATION (1)	GREEK-AUSTRALIAN POPULATION
	1975	1980*
0 - 10	28%	(1/17) 6%
11 - 50	21%	(1/17) 6%
51 -100	43%	(5/17) 30%
101 +	8%	(10/17) 58%

SOURCES (1) PRESDEE (1975 : 19)
*Approximate percentages

Detailed comparisons are difficult because of the differences in time: Presdee's data were for 1975; and also because of the small size of the present Sample. However it is apparent that in 1980 the Greek-Australian students interviewed tended to reside in the lower status suburbs. This tendency has been reported in studies of the residential settlement patterns of Australian cities (e.g. BURNLEY 1971, 1975).

(ii) STUDENT'S BIRTH PLACE

Examination of Table 5 shows that these data are derived from a predominantly second-generation population : 14 of the respondent were born in Australia and the 3 born in Greece came to Australia when they were 2, 2 and 3 years of age. All parents were born in Greece.

Table 5 STUDENT'S BIRTHPLACE

Australia	14
Greece	3
N =	17

(b) THEIR PARENTS:

(i) PARENTAL EDUCATION

Many writers have described the comparatively low levels of formal education of the parents of Ethnic-Australian students. The parents of the students in this study are no exception. Table 7 indicates that only 2 parents, both males, even commenced tertiary studies. The general trend is of the fathers having experienced marginally higher levels of schooling than the students' mothers. However, the majority of parents (25 out of 34) have at best completed their primary schooling. Two parents were described as being literate in Italian but not in Greek: a not uncommon occurrence in the Dodocannese region of Greece and is a consequence of Italian occupation. No parents in this study have returned to formal schooling in Australia.

Table 6 PARENTAL EDUCATION

	Fathers	Mothers
Tertiary	1	0
Incomplete Tertiary	1	1
Trade	1	0
Completed Secondary	1	0
Incomplete Secondary	2	2
Completed Primary	5	4
Incomplete Primary	6*	8*
None	0	1
Unknown	0	1
	17	17

* 1 person literate in Italian but not in Greek.

(ii) PARENTAL OCCUPATION

Again, frequent reference has been made in the literature to the low-levels of occupational skills of many of the Southern European and Mediterranean immigrants to Australia: this is not unexpected in a population of predominantly rural, peasants. Table 7 presents data of parental occupations in Greece prior to immigration, together with their occupational histories since their arrival in Australia.

TABLE 7 - PARENTAL OCCUPATION IN AUSTRALIA AND GREECE

	AUSTRALIA		GREECE	
Student	Father	Mother	Father	Mother
1	Tailor in a factory	Tailor	Tailor	Home Help
2	Tailor	Factory	Tailor	Home help
3	Land agent (factory, market gardener then builder)	Home-duties	Farm labourer	Farm labourer
4	Shop-keeper (factory)	Shop-keeper (factory)	Airforce tailor	Home help
5	Seasonal Worker (factory worker)	Labourer (factory)	Farm labourer	Farm labourer
6	Electrician & (shop property Manager owner)	Home duties (machinist)	Shoe-repairer	Home help
7	Market gardener (not known)	Home-duties	Farm labourer	Not known
8	Labourer (railways Chryslers)	Cleaner	Army	Home help
9	Maintenance fitter	Home duties (factory)	Trade-School	Dress maker
10	Labourer	Home duties	Farmer	Farmer
11	Bus-driver (railways)	Housewife (machinist)	Farmer	Not known
12	Spray-painter	Home duties	Pilot	Farmer
13	Tailor (Chryslers, Rubber Mills)	Tailor Factory-cannery	Tailor	Tailor
14	Shoe-repairer (factory 7 rural labourer)	Home-duties (dress making factory)	Shoe repairer	Dress maker
15	Deceased (G.M.H.)	Pensioner	University student	Not known
16	Carpenter	Nurse's aide		
17	Labourer	Cleaner	Farmer	Farmer

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(iii) PARENT'S REASONS(S) FOR LEAVING GREECE

Analysis of these data is qualified by the fact that they are the children's perceptions of their parents' reasons for leaving Greece. Only one student stated that his father's initial reason for coming to Australia was to make money and return to Greece (a frequently cite explanation of some Anglo-Australians). With the exceptions of legal hastles (one case), war in Cyprus (one case) and self-education (one case), all other responses indicated that the primary motives for migration were 'economic' or 'relatives or more generally a combination of the two.

THE MIGRATION EXPERIENCE:

The *Migration Experience* as described above consists of three inter-related aspects.

In summary these are the interaction between parental experiences and expectations of education in Greece and Australia, and that of their children and the notion of ethnic identity. *Ethnic identity* is viewed as the outcomes of the ways in which Greek-Australian students have negotiated being *ethnic* through the various levels of Australian education.

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF EDUCATION

(i) GREECE

Reference to the discussion above indicates that the parents of sample-students exhibit the expected characteristics of low levels of education in Greece and low levels of occupational skills and specialization. (See Tables 6 & 7). The parents who were interviewed reaffirmed these statements and explained them in terms of *the economic necessity to leave school and work in the fields* or *the lack of availability of secondary schools e.g. there wasn't a secondary school on my island* (Father: aged 53).

However lack of formal education of parents does not appear to negate an awareness of the advantages of formal education: especially as a means of social mobility. All of the students and parents interviewed indicated that the opportunity for the better education as provided in Australia was at least a minor consideration in the out-migration decision of the parents. One parent (male 60 years) for example stated:

> *I thought Australian schools would be better because the government pays for the children's education. The kids learn better when they have good facilities ... Yes, that was important because education helps children to become better people and become good and educated people.* (translated)

Another parent stated:

> *Australian schools are better because the government pays to send children to school. I don't know about Greece because I never went to school. It is important for my children to go to school so that they can live a better life. So they don't have to live like peasants. If they are good at school they can be doctors, lawyers, architects: jobs which make the most money so that they can live better than we did.* (Male: 53 year - translated).

In summary, it appears that whilst most of the parents have had minimal experiences of education in Greece, this did not prevent them from developing an awareness of advantages offered by education in Australia.

Issues related to parental reactions to Australian schools and whether or not their expectations have been realized will be discussed later

(ii) AUSTRALIA

Parental expectations and experiences of Australian education systems have been tempered by their overall expectations and experiences of settlement in Australia. Smolicz (1971) has referred to Australian Schools as being assimilationist agencies: places where the Anglo-Conformist ideologies of the receiving society were asserted as right and proper for all Australians be they of Anglo-Saxon origin or not. What have been the reactions of parents whose children have been confronted by this ideology and its educational manifestations? In what ways have their experiences in Australia been affected by these culturally arrogant social and educational ideologies?

The students interviewed perceived their parents' experiences in Australia as characterized by an emphasis upon material possessions and of a compromise between their traditional values, attitudes and behaviour expectations and those of the receiving society. One female student described her parent's experiences in Australia as follows:

> *Their living standards have improved but their values and attitudes have not changed so much. They are aware of things going on in Australia but they will perceive things in a Greek way.*

Another student stated:

> *They have come to accept the Australian way of life, but they have also maintained their own culture. They found it hard to adjust to the Australian way of life at first. My mother still can't speak Australian very well.*

The stresses induced by the necessity to adapt to and compromise with the Australian life style were emphasized in a variety of responses:

> *... they have had to change to a new life-style but this has not really brought them together.*

> *... they have changed only in recent years - they've had to as they realized that their children have started go grow up.*

> *... they have more money and possessions, but they've also been forced to be less strict.*

and

> *... they have not had favourable experiences in Australia. They are determined though to stick it out. Australia made them what they are today.*

The parental responses also reflected these stresses. One father described his experiences in Australia in the following way:

> *My brother was here and he wrote to me and told me it was good and rich place to come to. I came to work for a few years and leave. But now we have settled here and are used to the way of life here. But if I won a lottery I would leave straight away. I still wish to return. All that keeps me here is my children.* (Translated)

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Student and parent respondents provided further evidence of the apparent alienation or segregation of many Greek-Australians in their descriptions of their social activities. Parental social activities ranged both in nature and level of involvement. There was however, a general tendency to locate these activities almost exclusively in ethnically-based organizations such as Churches, regional associations, youth activities and social welfare agencies. There appeared to be little, if any contact with non-Greeks in these activities.

Similarly, the general tendency was for the students to engage in activities within the Greek Community: but not exclusively. Weekend activities varied widely ranging from family and regional group-centred festivals and visits to age-centred entertainments such as discos, parties and outings to hotels and recreation centres.

Further, some students expressed a preference to spend free time at College with other Greek students: a tendency which became so common as to cause other students to refer to a section of the student area as the *ghetto*.

Thus one effect of the interaction between ethnicity and the prevailing social ideology of assimilation has been the tendency for Greek-Australian parents and to a lesser extent their tertiary student children to become involved in social activities which are specifically centred within their ethnic social networks.

Evidence from data collected from both populations indicates that the major dimension of interaction between Greek-Australian adults and Australian society is business. For example, one of the male parent respondents stated:

> *I can understand English but I can't speak too well. I only speak it sometimes: when I have to at work, or I go to an office - anything associated with my work.* (Translated)

Many of the parents were described by their children as being greatly disadvantaged by the language barrier. Situations such as parent interviews at school or visits to government departments were frequently avoided because of their parents' lack of competence in English. Further, many of the parents were employed in work situations (e.g. assembly lines) which were predominantly Greek speaking: Thus, avoiding the necessity of developing a basic competence in spoken English.

Other parents were forced to develop a minimal competence in English because they were involved in self-employed occupations with face-to-face contact with a wide-range of customers. One father, a tailor, described his situations:

> *In an emergency I can speak English. I haven't associated with Australians to be able to speak English well. However, when someone comes to our shop and wants a job done I can cope. When I go to offices and doctors I take an interpreter. This is often one of my children.* (Translated)

A considerable body of literature exists describing the English-language learning problems of newly-arrived non-English speaking children. In general, part of the explanation of these problems has been that mother-tongue spoken at home inhibits the development of English - language competence. Schools, through their efforts at teaching these children English have been so successful that an increasing proportion of students in tertiary education come from this background. However, the impact of this apparent success upon ethnic family-life in general, and parents in particular is frequently not considered. For example, how does the father quoted above feel when he has to take one of his children with him when he goes on personal business or to a doctor? The child, because of its competence in English is placed in a position of potential power over his parent. Further, the child acts not only as an interpreter of important information upon which a wide range of decisions is made, but also as the major link between his family and the English-speaking, dominant culture.

Recently, schools have become more aware of the need to overcome some of the problems caused by differential levels of English-language competence within families. One way in which these problems have been approached has been through the appointment of bilingual teachers, teacher-aides and interpreters in schools with a large number of children from families where the mother-tongue is a language other then English. One outcome of this trend has been evident in the employability of bilingual exit students from this College: a fact which has caused some level of discontent amongst the monolingual, Anglo-Australian students.

The necessity for such changes is evident in the following data:

Table 9 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLING

Involvement (ie attendance at parent interviews meetings etc.)	Primary School	Secondary School
FREQUENT	1	1
OCCASIONAL	5	7
NEVER	11	9
	17	17

These data suggest that levels of parental involvement (as measured by attendance at formal school functions) is minimal during Primary schools and only marginally more frequent during secondary school. The reasons for these low levels of attendance are many. Amongst the students' responses to questions eliciting data in this area were:

> *My mother came to school only a few times. She didn't have much contact because of the language barrier.*
>
> *No not really. They were too embarrassed that they couldn't speak the language.*
>
> *No my parents didn't come to anything when I was at Primary school. And they only came to a couple of Parents' Nights at High school.*

and *My parents didn't attend any school functions. Firstly they didn't understand the language: and secondly they had the attitude that the school should do the job.*

However, it is important that these data are not interpreted as evidence of parental disinterest. Some students suggested that their parents attended school functions even when they didn't understand, merely to express their interest. Other students replied that whilst they would have preferred their parents to attend, they did not consider their non-attendance evidence of lack of interest. Finally, most students emphasized that they received considerable support from their parents. Parental respondents indicated that they were desperately concerned for their children to succeed and were frustrated by their perceived inability to participate in their children's schooling because of their own limited education and the barriers that English langauge competence posed for them. They were *locked out* from full participation in their children's education.

The final stage in this alienation of parents from a meaningful participation in their children's education occurs once their children successfully *survive* secondary schooling and enter tertiary education. At this stage, the remoteness of the Anglo-Saxon hegemony of Australian education finally asserts itself. Data derived from both student and parent populations indicate that parents have little or no knowledge of what happens in tertiary education institutions. One parent responded:

> *I have no idea what goes on there, I have only been on the outside to see what it is like. And I don't know how to speak English to be able to speak to any lecturers.* (Translated)

The only time parents even contemplate venturing onto the campus is on Graduation Day. The rituals and symbolism of which merely places in high relief parental perceptions and experiences of Australian education. Again, it must be emphasized, these graduating students are the survivors. What inestimable damage and degradation must the parents of unsuccessful ethnic students have experienced in their attempts to participate in their children's education?

Thus, the compromise made by many ethnic parents for the benefit of their children (that is migrating and sending their children to Australian schools) denigrates them both as parents and as people. The academic achievements of their children and the associated occupational mobility it has provided are perhaps some compensation for, and justification of, the de-humanising effects of some of their experiences in Australia.

ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION:

Identity is generally considered to be formed as part of the normal processes of socialisation. But while a considerable body of literature exists which takes as its focus the general notion of ethnic identification (MARTIN: 1976; FALK: 1978; and HARRIS: 1980), little if any research has attempted to study the factors influencing the development of an ethnic identity in an Australian context. We are unsure of the precise nature of ethnic identities - despite the currency given to them. For example, the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council designated 'cultural identity' as one of the three key concepts in its Charter for Multiculturalism in Australia. (AUSTRALIAN ETHNIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL: 1977).

However, the sense of peoplehood embodied in the notion of ethnic identity does have meaning for many people in Australia, and especially Greek-Australians. Ethnic group membership and the individual expression of it through an ethnic identity are additional elements which ethnic-Australians must negotiate in many spheres of social interaction. They are aware of a meaning and it is to this self-identificational meaning that I will refer in this paper.

Data from this study suggest that the awareness of student's ethnic identity is a gradually evolving process. At primary school few could recollect any assertions of their Greekness. Secondary school was generally described as being characterized by a growing sense of their ethnic group membership. By the time they reached tertiary education most students were aware of their ethnic identity - the issue was how to negotiate it.

It is to a more detailed analysis of this changing awareness and the processes producing it that I now wish to turn.

Australian society (and particularly its schools) had already succeeded in imposing its Anglo-conformity on one significant aspect of the respondent's identity - their names. All students interviewed used Anglicized versions of their given names as their response to the issue of maintaining an ethnic name in Australian schools. At home, students were generally called by their Greek name or its diminutive. Greek names are not a label decided upon by parents; they have important fillial and religious significance - they are part of your past as well as your present. They are an important part of your Greekness.

The assertion of difference implicit in the Anglicizing of a given name is one example of the potency of the process which challenge an individual's ethnic identity on the first day of school and continue throughout his/her schooling. Negotiating an ethnic identity in schools requires the sacrifice of one important component of your identity: your name.

Students recalled other examples of their growing awareness of their 'difference' at primary school:

> *One thing I do remember is that my mother always walked me to school and carried my bag - even in Year 7.*
>
> *I used to throw my school lunches over the fence on my way to school rather than eat it with the other kids at school.*

Even attendance at Greek school - an activity specifically encouraged by parents because it reaffirms and reasserts a child's Greek background - was recollected as a target of negative comments from some primary teachers.

Most students described their secondary schooling as a period of limited, but growing awareness of themselves as members of an ethnic group. Some reported a growing awareness of the differing expectations which they perceived as existing between their parents and 'Anglo' parents. Further female students began to become aware of an increased involvement in their lives by their parents and relatives. One student stated:

> *I could not go out with Australian friends even if my parents would have let me. If I was seen by my relatives, and we have many living near our house, my parents would be told. You have no private life when you are a Greek girl.*

Peer group pressures are a common experience of all adolescents, but they appear to be more accentuated for Greek students because of the restrictions being imposed by parental interpretations of Australian society. All respondents stated that their parents were 'fearful', 'shocked' and rejecting of the ways they believed Anglo-Australian parents neglected their adolescent children. The freedom, the apparent lack of respect for parents and the general informality were all negatively evaluated by Greek parents. Consequently, Greek students were increasingly restricted by their parents to a predominantly 'Greek' circle of friends, and Greek activities. The most significant example of the pressures encounted in secondary schools was provided by a male student who was enrolled in a single sex, Protestant private school. He recalled his first years in this school as 'trying to survive'.

> *I became more Australian than the Australian boys. I played footy; I played cricket; I talked to girls, and still they called me a *** Greek!*

In many ways, tertiary education provided these Greek-Australian students with the greatest challenges to their ethnic identities. Despite their professed varying degrees of 'Greekness' at secondary school, all students felt under threat on their entry to tertiary education.

The predominantly Anglo-Australian structures of the College, the freedom to make your own decisions about what and when you wanted to learn, the 'open' modes of teaching, the questioning of the 'status quo', the night lectures were all seen as non-Greek. Further, most students in the sample had adopted a common mode of coping with these factors - the formation of a Greek clique. To be Greek-Australian was more significant and more unifying than any other factor.

The Greek students' group was both a method of coping and a source of reinforcement. For example, students organized their subject choice, their lecture and tutorial timetables on an ethnic basis: they attended the same classes. Teaching practice placements were made in conjunction with other Greek students. A country teaching option was generally accepted only if other members of the clique were going to the same school. A separate Greek student group, the Ouzo Club, was formed to organise social functions separate from those organized by the Student Union. (The only other students actively involved in these activities were some of the Italian-Australian students). A defined, and generally openly acknowledged section of the cafeteria became euphemistically known as the 'ghetto' - the safety-in numbers response. Ethnic group membership and its consequent ethnic identity were therefore openly and forcefully expressed.

Two powerful processes appeared to underly these behaviours. Firstly, all but one respondent acknowledged that their primary group application at College was with other Greek-Australian students. This application prevailed in activities outside of normal College life. Students stated that their sphere of interaction was almost exclusively in Greek activities (regional associations, youth groups and Church activities) with many of the same consiants they had at College. All attended religious functions regularly, and this as a time when many non-Greek students were both questioning formal religious dogma and not attending Church. Again, their Greekness prevailed over factors which affected other students.

The second, and perhaps more powerful influence was that their ethnic identity was becoming more overtly defined and reinforced through an increased parental involvement. Parents were acknowledged as being even more interventionist in matters of dress, friends, where to go, career choice and future expectations (e.g. marriage) than they remembered them being during the secondary school phase. Contacts at College with other non-Greek students forced the Greek students to become aware of and to reinforce that their parents were acting as culturally-defined Greek parents. The freedom given to Anglo-students - especially the women - was seen as a potentially bad influence by all the Greek parents interviewed. The 'latent' ethnic identity negotiated through primary and secondary school could no longer be sustained against these countervailing forces. Most students expressed a realisation that there was no real, viable escape from their Greekness - even if they wanted it. It appeared that the way in which these students coped was to acknowledge the primacy of their Greekness and to openly express a pride in it. There was, in fact, not one student who responded in the opposite mode - that is to reject their Greekness. I am not asserting that this does not occur; it may happen later when individuals may have more resources or greater motivation to make this decision to make this radical departure from the culturally situated norm.

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POST SCRIPT - SHATTERED IDENTITIES

Following the data collection phase of the study of which this paper forms part, the author had the unique opportunity to observe some of the Sample population negotiating their Greek-Australian identities in a totally Greek situation. A group of thirteen Greek-Australian teacher education students accompanied the author on a four week Field Experience program in a school in Athens.

The program was organized to provide students with an opportunity to gain experience of Greece and the Greek education system and to develop knowledge, skills and linguistic abilities in their ethnic culture.

They discovered that their 'Greekness' was substantially different from the 'Greekness' of contemporary Athenians. The dances and music which had been used to support the development of the Greek component of their identities were difficult, if not impossible to find in the discos and tavernas of Athens. The language they spoke - the supposed core of their Greek culture - and the accents with which they spoke it reinforced their non-Greekness. Taxi drivers for example recognized their Australian accents. Language differences were most pronounced in the school setting. Some students felt both threatened and inadequate because very young children spoke better Greek than they did. Australianisms and words derived from their Greek-Australian experience frequently caused puzzlement to their pupils and disruption to their lessons.

It must be noted that once this very difficult period was survived most students were very happy in Greece and found it very difficult to leave.

The effect of this confrontation with the 'real' Greek culture can be summarized: these sudents left Australia as Greek-Australians and returned as Australian-Greeks.

Families, schooling and work in the Latrobe Valley

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INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the relationships between work, schooling and working class families in a Latrobe Valley town. These relationships are explored using data collected in two studies associated with a technical school we have called Valley Technical School. One study investigated aspects of a 'transition programme' for girls, and the other studied the 'destinations' of the students who had left the school. Generations and gender, we contend, are important 'fault-lines' which cut across families, schools and labour markets with important consequences for the relationships which are created within and between these social structures. After a lengthy discussion of the context and results of our studies, two particular issues are considered in the light of some recent Australian research from various related areas.

A Note on the Research Designs and Methods

The first study was of a major school to work a transition programme for all the girls at Valley Tech; this programme received substantial funding from the Transition Education Advisory Committee (TEAC), and the costs of the study were met by the Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education (GIAE). This study commenced in February 1981 and continued for a year. The second study was of all the leavers from the school from 1978 to 1981; this was jointly resourced by Valley Tech, GIAE and the Department of Community Welfare Services. The project spanned four months from June 1982 and included a questionnaire survey of all the school leavers, followed by individual interviews with a representative sample of thirty of those leavers who had experienced unemployment. The first study was based on a more complicated research design which included questionnaires for all students, group and individual interviews with girls, interviews with boys, staff and other significant adults, observations of meetings and events, analysis of documents and ten family interviews in the home.

The data discussed in this paper were principally derived from the thirty interviews with school leavers and from the ten family interviews. All interviews were tape recorded, the former were usually of an hour's duration and the latter ranged from about one to three hours including written notes. These qualitative data were supported by the quantitative and qualitative data collected from the surveys, other interviews and observations. Although the interview samples were representatively selected, there are limitations on the inferences that can be made beyond the town in which the two studies were completed. Our discussion is about how these families shaped their children's passage through secondary education to the adult world of work. We shall commence by briefly explaining the structure of the labour market in the Latrobe Valley and the ways transition education has been used at Valley Tech to address the problems girls face in trying to find work.

THE LATROBE VALLEY: JOBS, GENERATIONS AND GENDER

The Latrobe Valley is located about 150 kilometres east of Melbourne. The Valley's economy is based upon the exploitation of brown coal, trees and grass. Settlement is patterned as a dispersed conurbation comprising three principal towns (Moe, Morwell and Traralgon) and a variety of smaller towns which are all inter-linked quite significantly. The Latrobe Valley's population is around 60,000. Valley Technical School is located in Traralgon, the largest town which adjoins the Valley's latest power station - Loy Yang.

The most significant generator of paid work in the Latrobe Valley is the State Electricity Commission of Victoria (SECV). The SECV operates five brown coal fired electric power production plants scattered throughout the Valley. About forty percent of the Valley's entire workforce are employed by the SECV, or the contractors who construct the Commission's power stations; in 1981 this amounted to about 12,000 employees. The next biggest employer is the Australian Paper Manufacturers which had 1,730 people on their payroll in 1981 (Kinhill, 1981: 12.18). A broad idea of the 'skill structure' of the SECV's workforce can be ascertained from Tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1 in here

TABLE 2 in here

The SECV workforce can be summarised as 'skilled' and 'male' : over 95% of all workers are men, and between two-thirds and three quarters of these workers possess some form of 'skill'; this workforce has relatively few 'unskilled' and 'highly skilled' or 'professional' workers. Women seeking work in the Latrobe Valley face the 'traditional' options: machine and process work in clothing, footwear and telecommunications equipment factories, shop work and office work. The job prospects are not good, for example, in 1981 only 830 jobs existed in larger factories and there were about 2,500 jobs occupied by women in the clerical, administrative and sales area. Employment prospects for women are severely limited - for example, in May 1980 there were only 17 job vacancies for women in the administrative and sales category and 564 women registered as unemployed applicants for these jobs. Furthermore, this 'female' labour market is under threat from the major factors creating unemployment in Australia : the recession, the 'collapse' of manufacturing industry and technological change.

The fundamental decisions which shape the Valley's labour market are made in the Melbourne offices of the SECV, the APM, the state government and the large 'retailing chains' (Gibson, 1981; Puffin, 1975). The major investment plans provide for more of the same; more power stations and some other developments in brown coal technology. In recent years the SECV has espoused 'equal opportunity' employment policies, and the Commission provides some encouragement for women to take up 'non-traditional' jobs. The employers who control the Valley's labour market are looking for employees with a narrow range of skills, who traditionally have been men who have undergone education based upon mathematics, science, technical drawing and machine tool skills.

In 1981 Valley Tech had 530 students (140 girls and 390 boys). The school opened in 1960 as a boys' technical school. In the early seventies a small number of girls were admitted at Year Ten level to undertake business studies courses. In 1973 the school officially became co-educational with its first intake of girls at Year Seven. There are two other technical schools in the Latrobe Valley, both cater largely for boys, although they too are to become co-educational.

Like Melbourne's trams, Victoria's technical schools are often regarded as quaint relics of a bygone era; their ancestors, the junior technical schools, were developed to provide a preparatory education for aspiring tradesmen, engineers and scientists. Those entering trades received a certificate which was a useful entrance to an apprenticeship, while the aspiring engineers and scientists went on to a technical college. Today the technical schools are a 'type' of state secondary school. They still emphasise vocational education (many of their staff have industrial experience), but they also have much in common with high schools. However, technical schools cannot provide sixth-form certificates which will lead to universities, and most cannot provide an 'alternative sixth-form' for entrance to CAE's.

Concern about the 'transition from school to work' is the most recent manifestation of a continuing concern over the relationship between state secondary schooling and the labour market. We cannot deal comprehensively with this issue here,but it is important to recognise the importance of the dynamics of the structures schooling provides as a preparation for citizenship and the labour market. To put it crudely, schools have been a very effective means of soaking up excesses of young people when they are no longer wanted on the labour market. This set of processes, however, is not a smooth running mechanism, but rather a process of painful negotiation. Let us illustrate this with reference to the latest transition fad.

'Transition policy' has been formulated as an educational response to changes in the structure of the labour market which have occurred throughout the capitalist world in the last few decades. The Fraser Government, which developed transition education in Australia, put it this way: 'the aim of the Commonwealth's policy is that ultimately all young people in the 15 to 19 years of age group would be provided with options in education, training and employment, or any combination of these, either part-time or full-time, so that unemployment becomes the least acceptable alternative'(Carrick, 1979:2789). In bureaucratic practice, transition policy became a 'hotch-potch' of schemes which were grafted on to individual schools or groups of schools. The Valley Tech Girls' Programme, therefore, resulted from a negotiation between 'local' teachers who were interested in solving 'local' problems and remote 'regional' and 'state' policy makers who were implementing the 'transition policy'. Thus, we can identify 'macro-level' and 'micro-level' forces at work which (potentially) could lead to structural changes in Valley Technical School. The major area opened up for negotiation was the education of girls, and, particularly, the means by which Valley Tech. could educate its girls to fit into the local labour market.

Families are vitally important to schools and labour markets in capitalist societies: they 'supply' the former with students and the latter with workers. Families support themselves with the money they can earn from the labour market, or from interest if they own property, and with the fruits of the 'voluntary' domestic labour of family members. It is possible to speak of 'breadwinners' and 'dependants'. Breadwinners are family members who can earn a money income and 'dependants' are those who depend upon this money income because they do not earn one themselves. Of course, it has to be recognised that the 'dependants' are also workers; for instance, a 'housewife' supplies services to a 'breadwinner husband' which are very important to his capacity to go out and earn the family income. Families usually involve two generations (the parents and their children); the children, who are the 'rising generation', are dependants until they leave the family and/ or start earning an income. The class position of families has an important impact upon relationships within families, and certainly affects the relationships which exist between the family and the schools which family members attend.

The families associated with Valley Technical School are working class, as Tables 3 and 4 demonstrate.

TABLE 3 in here

TABLE 4 in here

In these families there are a variety of 'breadwinning' and 'dependency' relationships: in most families the husband/father is the 'breadwinner' involved in the labour market; some families have both the husband/father and wife/mother involved in paid work; a smaller proportion of families are supported by a single parent (usually a mother), who earns an income by working or from a pension or by some combination of both; in families which contain children who have left school, these children may make significant monetary contributions to the family economy.

Labour markets, schools and families inter-relate to create and maintain many gender differences. The dual labour market has an important effect on the structure of the school curriculum. The major distinction within families stems from the husband/fathers' involvement in the labour market, and wife/mothers' involvement in unpaid child care and domestic labour. In 'two-income', families gender differentiation is maintained because each parent will usually be involved in a 'male' or 'female' labour market respectively. Student/children from either of these types of families could be expected to regard a school curriculum which fosters gender differentiation as 'normal'. Our research suggests that there may be some changes occurring with regard to gender relations in families, schools and at work, and that there are very important linkages between these three institutions.

GENERATIONS, GENDER, SCHOOLING

Virtually all the parents and young people we interviewed believed that schooling has an important bearing upon adolescents' work aspirations and, ultimately, upon their place in the labour market. Three issues of importance emerged from the interviews: the character of the decision-making strategies adopted by families regarding entry to Valley Technical School, the views of parents and their daughters with regard to the relationship between schooling and the labour-market, and parents' and childrens' perceptions of women's participation in the workforce and family life.

Most of the students we interviewed had entered Valley Tech. after completing Year Six at a school in Traralgon or the surrounding rural areas. A small number of the girls we interviewed had moved across from Valley High School; some of these had been 'asked to leave', but most were seeking specialised education in business studies or art in Years Ten and Eleven. The decision to enter Valley Tech., in almost all cases, can be characterised as a 'family decision', which was regarded as important for the children's future, and which involved considerable discussion between parents and children. In most families the eventual choice was regarded by both parents and children as the children's decision. No families had considered the possibility of a private school; but some parents had urged their children to consider the high school, especially when those children were regarded as 'bright', 'brainy' or 'good with their heads'. The students who came across to do business studies and art had all made this decision for themselves, although they all had their parents' approval. In no cases did the parents force their children to attend Valley Tech. Most students had attended information days at the high and technical schools towards the end of Year Six. Many parents, generally mothers, had accompanied their children to these days.

What factors were seen as important in the choice of Valley Tech? Many parents and some students were influenced significantly by the manner in which they were treated on the information days. The technical school was seen as well run and friendly, and many were impressed by the teachers' capacities to relate to them. Some suggested quite negative reactions to the high school. Many of the parents interviewed had experienced little secondary education themselves and wanted facts on 'how schools are run these days'. Family tradition played an important part in many decisions. Parents who had been to technical schools themselves often emphasised their virtues. Many families had older children at the school and were happy for a brother or sister to follow in their footsteps. Some families chose the Tech. simply because it was close to their home.

Vocational aspirations played an important, but not dominant, part in the decisions of most students and parents. This was true, particularly, for some boys who felt that the technical school would give them a good preparation for a trade. Parents believed that their children could not, and should not, make specific vocational choices at eleven or twelve years of age. Nevertheless, many saw Valley Tech. as offering a practical education which would ultimately provide vocational advantages for their children. Most parents recognised that the technical school was not as 'academic' as the high school, and many believed it offered a better education for children who were 'not too bright'. None of the parents and students had considered the possibilities of a full-time post-secondary education when making Valley Tech. their choice. Parents and students alike were unaware that the technical school curriculum severely limits students' options for post-secondary education. In choosing Valley Tech. most parents and students were opting for a schooling which would provide an education congruent with their families' class position.

The majority of the parents and many of the girls we interviewed had a sound grasp of the difficulties which existed for young women in the Latrobe Valley labour market. Much of the information about job prospects for female school leavers, which was one central feature of the Girls' Programme, had made an impact. Many of the parents had learned of these ideas through their daughters, and via the programme's parents' meetings. However, many had a solid understanding of this situation from personal experience, and from ideas disseminated through the media by the Gippsland Career Options for Girls network. Many families discussed these issues in the course of daily life. However, most of the girls we surveyed remained committed to jobs traditionally seen as those for young women such as hairdresser, sales assistant and office work. (see table 5).

Furthermore, most of the girls, even those in Years Nine, Ten and Eleven, had not seriously addressed themselves to the prospects of obtaining a job. Most had made 'indirect choices' because of subject selections at school, and the majority were studying or intended to study business studies, art and a general course. Only two girls were studying applied science in Year Ten and none in Year Eleven. Most of these girls intended to stay at school for as long as they 'kept passing', and were able to maintain their interest in school. Their parents had ideas about schooling which tended to complement these views.

TABLE 5 in here

The majority of parents wanted their children to stay at school for as long as possible. Many parents expressed the hope that their children could get more out of schooling than they had. Quite a few spoke about being forced by economic and other circumstances to leave school early and take jobs. For example, Mrs. Jones who lives with the assistance of an invalid pension said:

> My future was curtailed because at thirteen, or twelve and a half, I got arthritis and had to leave school and I had only just started second form ... nothing ever happened in my life other than I got married and divorced and had a child .. that's about the extent of my life ... I'd like a lot more to happen in Anne's...

Mrs. Jones hopes Anne, who is in Year Seven, can do something with her hands, but she emphasises that Anne will have to make these decisions for herself. Anne told us she wanted to be a strapper or a nurse, her mother sees the former as a fantasy and the latter as beyond her academic abilities, but Mrs. Jones wants Anne to do something better than shop work : a trade such as carpentry would fit this desire. None of the parents wanted their own children to be forced to leave school. However, just as in the decision to go to the Tech., many parents suggested that their daughter's would have to 'decide for themselves' when they should leave school. The parents felt their responsibility was to counsel and support their children.

Many of the parents understood that it was the structure of the school curriculum which would determine how long their daughters would remain at school, and how well equipped they would be for the job market. Yet very few parents had a clear grasp of the structure of the curriculum, most knew of it indirectly through discussions with their daughters and contact with the school at parent-teacher meetings. They felt they had insufficient knowledge upon which to give their daughters advice about subject choice. Thus, despite generally good relations with the school, these parents felt 'shut-out' from the 'inner-meanings' of the curriculum. Furthermore, when they asked for details from teachers, they found the answers 'vague' and even evasive.

The bulk of the parents were quite sure of the vocational consequences of failure at school for their daughters, based upon their own experinece in the economy as producers and consumers. Mrs. Murphy expresses this well:

> "...I've worked my way up to be a dry cleaner. Fair enough I've got a grade behind me now, but its not an easy one, its not a beaut life for a girl. But, I needed a job and I was able to go through the ropes and taught myself a job, now I'm qualified, but I don't want to see her just stuck in a supermarket, nine to five ... they don't learn anything, those machines they use do it all for them ... they don't even have to talk to the customers. Well, I think she's got the ability to use her brain to maybe help somewhere along the line".

Mrs. Murphy's daughter, Sharon, is one of the few girls at the school who had expressed a definite interest in pursuing a career in an area of 'non-traditional' employment for women. Sharon, who was doing the applied science course in Year Ten, wanted to be a computer programmer. The girls who were interested in non-traditional jobs were all achieving well at school, and were succeeding at subjects within the science/maths and/or trade areas. They all had a considerable amount of family support in their endeavours, and, especially from competent and energetic mothers like Mrs. Murphy. The strength of the mothers' position within families seemed to have an important effect upon the educational aspirations of girls. The issue of the changing educational needs of girls had been addressed seriously by all the families we spoke with, and the forces which produce girls with aspirations towards 'non-traditional' vocations need to be viewed against this background.

All the parents believed there had been considerable changes relating to the position of women in Australian society in recent years. They all accepted that young women were a 'disadvantaged group' within the Latrobe Valley labour market, and supported the Girls' Programme as a valid means of attempting to overcome these problems. At the superficial level, there was a surprising acceptance among parents, and even most fathers, of women's equal rights to education and employment. Most spoke in terms of important changes which had occurred from their generation to that of their daughters. The right of women to work was not called into question, but the issues surrounding 'motherhood' and 'child care' were seen as problems yet to be solved. These issues are typified by Mr. McQueen who said:

> "The way we live these days centres around the work orientation as a couple ... you marry, you have a family, it gets to a stage where you think of second incomes. That's also got to be basically in your mind ... if you do marry and have a family, if you're left as a single parent, you've got to be able to support the situation"

Mr. McQueen works in the office at the APM and Mrs. McQueen works as a ladies hairdresser from their home.

A Year Nine girl, Robin Haigh, who wants to be a cabinet-maker proposed the following solution to child care and working at her trade; if she had young children she could work from a workshop at the back of her house. Mr. Kreiger, a Council caretaker, expressed the most 'traditional' views about mothers' responsibilities for child care. Mr. and Mrs. Kreiger also work as partners in a family catering business. They have eight children, Erica their sixth child hopes to get into architectural drafting. Mr. Kreiger has supported all his sons and daughters through secondary schooling, but believes women should not work while they have young children. 'Nature', he believes, requires women to look after babies, he does concede that he is going against 'the trend these days', and that his views are from the 'Stone Age'. Mrs. Kreiger, who is trained in catering, believes women have the right to work, but they must not neglect their children. She cites the case of her elder daughter, a printer, who took time off while she 'had her babies' and then returned to work. Even those parents whose daughters were interested in non-traditional work envisaged their daughters as earning 'second incomes' in later life, unless their marriages failed, which many accepted as a possibility in contemporary society.

GENERATIONS, GENDER AND THE SEARCH FOR WORK

The school leavers we interviewed, all of whom had experienced unemployment, had left school from various courses and at several stages in their schooling. Some had completed Year Eleven, but most had left by the end of Year Ten. Approximately half those interviewed had not completed Year Ten, which is usually seen as the minimum schooling level for admission to an apprenticeship, and about a quarter had left school before they completed Year Nine. In nearly every case a strong dislike of school was a powerful incentive to leave. Some, like Vicki, were 'asked to leave' because she - 'wasn't learning nothing and told the teachers where to go'. Others were looking for work and when any sort of job became available they left school, sometimes to lose the job soon afterwards. It was common for all these students to have had problems coping with the subjects they were studying and school life in general. For most, school was a struggle with authoritarian adults and with knowledge which they found uninteresting or irrelevant to them. Graham left because 'he couldn't take it there: the teachers, the work'; Hazel failed Year Nine because 'it was my own fault. I stayed away from school because I wanted to be away'. She believed there was no way she could see that school could be better, 'school just couldn't be interesting ... don't go to school'. The typical consequences for the school leavers were that they left school poorly equipped to cope with an adult life in an increasingly information laden society. Making sense of life is difficult when one's reading, writing and numeracy skills are about equivalent to the 'minimum' for a fourteen year old. Also, in terms of finding a place in the local labour market, the school leavers were victims of a contracted youth employment market. It is here that the gender structuring of both the labour market and the leavers' expectations merged to produce consequences which will undoubtedly have ramifications throughout the rest of their lives. The male school leavers from the group interviewed, found themselves in a position to look for various forms of unskilled work. Often this was labouring work in the construction and service industries. The work is usually temporary in nature and highly affected by the prevailing economic conditions. However, because the Valley's labour market contains a predominance of 'male' jobs, it is the female school leaver who is more likely to be confronted by unemployment. This goes far beyond the immediate problem of finding work. The paucity of 'female' jobs is not of a temporary nature but is in many respects a permanent change to the structure of the labour market (Jones, 1982; Windschuttle, 1979). Thus, those young women who have developed aspirations for traditional 'female' jobs are confronted, on leaving school, with the problem of unattainable expectations. To the extent that these expectations are basic to the self concepts of these women and to the future adult lives they understand for themselves, then the personal consequences are traumatic.

The trauma of unemployment for the young women in particular, but also for the young men, was often a shared family experience. As we have already suggested, parents usually had a good understanding of the nature of the Latrobe Valley labour market and its implications for their children. In the school leavers study more evidence was found of the action families took to help solve family members' unemployment. This action takes several forms and together they indicate the resilience of working class families during periods of stress. Unemployment of the young family members produced considerable stress in families.

Family action often incorporated extended family members from grandparents through to cousins. This action took three broad forms.

1. Understanding. Parents provided their unemployed children with understanding of the circumstances of their unemployment from several viewpoints. Perhaps most important to family solidarity was the view that the unemployment problem was rarely blamed on the family member concerned. It was anticipated that young people would find it difficult to get work and families explained this in terms of the lack of employment generally and, it seemed from the young people's explanations, to a wider but vague political-economic context. A typical comment from the interviewees was that their parents did not blame them, as long as they kept looking for work. The need to look for work, which was consistently acted upon, demonstrated that the families believed there was some labour market demand for their young members and, therefore, there was a need to be constantly job seeking. The young people said, especially if they were currently in work, that there was a need 'to be in the right place at the right time'; they also subscribed to the view of there being an element of luck in this process.

The parents' understanding of their children's unemployment extended to material support in the home. Unemployment benefits were often directly supplemented by additional money or by the purchase of goods. The level of indirect supplementation was considerable in the provision of free or cheap food and shelter in the family home. The interviewees saw this as an extension of their dependent status as school students until they found their first job. But it was also clear that during later periods of unemployment they received similar assistance and, in fact, even during periods of employment the children's contributions to the family budget were usually well below the actual value. This led most of the currently employed interviewees to state that it was often impractical for them to leave home because the costs of rent etc. would be prohibitive. Those who did leave home had either feuded with their parents or were commencing families of their own.

2. Job Seeking Assistance. The parents' understanding of the local labour market led them to directly intervene on behalf of their unemployed children. In this respect extended family and acquaintance contacts were used to increase the chance of finding out about a job and to increase the probability of their children obtaining jobs. A majority of the interviewees reported that they had found work this way; only a few obtained work through the CES even though they regularly used its services. It was the mothers who most actively looked for work for their children, especially their daughters. For example,

Diana's mother heard about a cleaning job at a motel. She took Diana there by car to enquire and the job was won. June's mother help her find her second job. Her mother heard one morning from a neighbour that a local bread shop had a vacancy. She immediately telephoned and the boss said 'bring her down in about ten minutes'. June recalled 'I had to get out of bed, rush around to get there'. June had been unemployed for seven months since leaving school twenty months ago. It seemed that mothers,in particular, were important in turning the belief about 'being in the right place at the right time' into action. Transport, especially in Traralgon, presents difficulties for unemployed young people (the local CES office is in Morwell twelve kilometres away), and usually mothers would drive their son or daughter to 'the right place at the right time'.

3. Job Creation. We interviewed some parents who had ideas for creating jobs for their daughters should they be unemployed on leaving school. For example, the Hesslops believed they could expand their farming activities to provide work for their daughter. We also found two cases in which job creation had been realised. Each family had recognised their daughter's talents and interests, one in horse training, showing and management, and the other in floristry. At the time of interview both girls had their own businesses operating. Sarah had left

school at the end of Year Ten and had tried to find work, especially to do with horses, but had been unsuccessful. She had already been helping to teach riding skills, train horses, etc. and so, with her mother's help, they tentatively commenced a business from home on their small holding. At the time of the interview, some eighteen months later, Sarah was working six and half days a week and saw she had a good future. Shirley's circumstances were slightly different. Some two years ago she had been in and out of work while looking for a job as a cook. She obtained an assistant's job in a flower shop after a few months unemployment. She decided who would like to take up floristry and so studied it part-time in the evenings to obtain her certificate. She found that she could not find a job as a florist so she and her family decided to investigate operating a business. They leased a vacant shop and after some initial problems in obtaining flowers from growers, Shirley was supporting herself in the business and teaching floristry to her mother as her part-time assistant. Shirley emphasised the efforts of her parents in helping her and clearly felt very close to them. It seems amazing that Shirley, who had not completed Year Nine at Valley Technical School, was running her own business at seventeen. The important part that families play in job seeking, and even job creating, suggests that they are able to provide a 'service' to young people on an individual basis which matches talents

> and interests into available or creatable jobs in the local economy. Something that Valley Tech. was unable to do, at least for these people.

The actions which families took to support and assist their unemployed school leavers shows the important effect they had on the process of transition from school to work, where such transition also marks the onset of a generational transition. For the unemployed school leavers it was very much the case that the family provided useful knowledge (about the local labour market), practical action (job seeking and material support) and emotional stability. In mosts cases it was the mother who was responsible for much of this provision; in a few cases she was the only parent in the family home. The nature of the gender structured labour market in the Latrobe Valley, and of wider prevailing social attitudes to mothers working, probably contributed to mothers being placed in a position where they came into direct contact with the problems of unemployment for their children. The same gender structuring of the labour market creates the circumstance where there are many more unemployed young females than males and so, often, it was mothers who were assisting daughters to find a personal solution to the problem of finding a place in the labour market.

Some of the solutions found for girls were much less secure and rewarding than those found by Sarah and Shirley in their businesses. About a fifth of the females were in marginal positions in the labour market. Theirs was usually the hourly paid labour in motels or hotels often cleaning, kitchen or bar work. The hours worked could change daily, employers would frequently request split shifts, evening and weekend work. Because employers' decisions about work were made with little warning, sometimes amounting to telephone calls for immediate assistance, and because they needed to keep their employers happy, the girls said that they could rarely plan for their leisure time without risking cancelling bookings or arrangements. They were happy to be working, but all wanted a better, more secure, job. Of course, job creation can only succeed in a few cases because of the nature of the local economy and it has to be seen as an extension of the other forms of support that these families were prepared to extend to their unemployed children.

BEYOND PARSONIAN AND MARXIAN FUNCTIONALISM

To conclude this paper we would like to discuss two issues emerging from our study which demonstrate how working class families contend with changes in the structure of schooling and the labour market, especially relating to youth unemployment and gender relations. These changes are best viewed, we believe, as constraints applied by powerful forces attempting to exploit working class families. We would endorse the views of Pringle and Shaver who suggest that 'we no longer talk of the family as functional to capital but rather how the state makes it so', and who implore that 'we must move towards a more open-ended approach, examining how the working class themselves create family structures, but do so within a set of constraints' (Shaver, 1983:161). For instance, families contending with youth unemployment are prepared to expend considerable effort in finding forms of employment for their younger members. Further, working class families are prepared to address changes in gender relations which are presented to them by the dynamics of the labour market, changes in schooling and wider calls for 'sexual equality'.

Even though family members believed in the importance of schooling for finding a 'decent job', they had little influence upon its operation or little understanding of how it worked. Valley Tech. was accepted as their local version of a fact of life: schooling is compulsory. Parents demonstrated considerable support for the notion that their children should stay at school as long as possible. They clearly believed that the successful completion of schooling up to Year Eleven was useful for finding work. However, they also were relatively sympathetic to those children who wanted to leave school early because they were unable to cope. The problem of unemployment emerged for every family during the final years of the younger family members' schooling and became significant when a 'decent' job had to be found in the Latrobe Valley.

There was evidence of families anticipating problems for their children finding a place in the labour market and planning to create work for them. In two instances this had been put into effect,which also had generated work for the mothers as a consequence. This demonstrated how families understood their members' individual abilities and interests, and were able to match them to the local economy. It would seem that the 'cultural capital' of these families was sufficient to construct such 'solutions' to their children's employment 'problems' and also that the local economy was able to support such new ventures.

For us this raises questions of how to explain the fact that some working class families see themselves as being able to create work for themselves. We feel that such an explanation obviously needs to go beyond functionalist theories even though the work created still occupies a legitimate, if marginal, place in the local economy. The action, or thought of action, produced by the families implied a less than passive movement into the existing structure of the labour market. It was also clear that the action taken was related to the gender structuring of work and leisure activities for both generations in the families. Even when assisting job seeking, support for the unemployed as well as job creation, it was usual for mothers to shoulder much of the burden in the family. The fact that the mothers were available to perform these tasks was predominantly due to the gender relations in the family allocating the first breadwinning task to the fathers. The job creation features of family life which mothers perfomed were usually connected with their daughters' work. This irony signified the families' beliefs about the next generation of women's breadwinning being important.

We believe this raises the question of how gender relations change. Our evidence suggests that there have been changes, and deliberate attempts to change, at school and in the family, but that these generally have been superficial rather than fundamental. The more fundamental changes appeared to be taking place in families where women had struggled against men, especially in previous marriages or at the work place. The sharp focus of separation and divorce led mothers to communicate to their daughters the need to be able to succeed without the support of men and against their resistance. Success for their daughters in Valley Technical School's terms would have to be in the maths/science or trade subjects which would often lead to 'non-traditional' jobs. Such success, together with other broader, and perhaps superficial, changes may lead to a generation of adults for whom gender relations would be less differentiated and more equal. Amongst the current generation of adults it seems that the two income family necessarily brings some changes to gender relations in the family. This is partly because women who 'breadwin' cannot entirely be allocated the dependent subservience to men and also because it then becomes more difficult to allocate all the home and child-rearing work to women. School programmes such as Valley Tech's Girls Programme operate as consciousness raising exercises for the majority of girls, and provide support for the minority of girls, and their parents, who are ready to make more fundamental changes.

The findings from our two small studies can be added to the large stockpile of data which has been accumulated by decades of research into the nature of the relationships between families, schooling and work in capitalist societies. Despite all this endeavour only limited progress has been made towards developing explanations of these relationships, and efforts to make families, schools and workplaces better places to inhabit have been even less successful. Indeed, it is very depressing to read at the end of a report upon an expensive national survey of almost 5,000 young school leavers that

> 'most of the observed differences between individuals remain unexplained and by any absolute standard we cannot account very well for these outcomes ... The point, of course, is that one should not expect to be able to explain large amounts of variance in these somewhat unpredictable systems. Nor should one expect to be able to make major changes by manipulating those policy variables we deal with ...'
>
> (Williams and others, 1979: 126-127).

However, we believe there are some useful signposts towards theoretical and methodological progress, and these are evident in both sides of Australia's own 'great big inequality debate'(see Connell and others, 1982: 210 for references). One set of protagonists, Connell, Ashenden and Co. have attempted to move theoretically and methodologically 'beyond the reproduction approach', in their quest for explanations and political strategies; while their adversaries, led by Edgar, have made an attempt to go 'beyond deficit theory' the basis of their contribution (See Edgar, 1980:180-205). Both approaches recognise the need to improve on the functionalism implicit in work as different as Branson and Miller's (1979) 'reproduction' accounts and Williams and colleagues (1980) 'body and attitudes' counting. Connell's group and Edgar also agree upon the fundamental importance of the family as an arena in which people engage in a 'rather astonishing process by which, in only twenty years, innocent infants are transformed into estate agents, football fanatics, Liberal voters and the unemployed' (Connell and others, 1982: 74). Edgar has explained this as a process by which parents bring home 'competencies' and 'resources' from their involvement in occupations which influence family members competence in their dealings with schools which affect childrens' school performance and, ultimately, influence their occupational attainment. For Edgar parents are involved in a labour market which is an 'occupational hierarchy' or 'meritocracy' which rewards 'talent differently'. For Connell, Ashenden and Co. parents are involved with a labour market which, while segmented, is shaped fundamentally by the ownership and control of the means of production by a ruling class. Parents bring home 'world-views' based upon their place in the domination and subordination inherent in the class practices of the work place. Despite these fundamental disagreements both types of account would view working class family life as the home base of people with the dice loaded against them at school and at work, but nevertheless people who are able to exercise relative power and who will, when given the opportunity. Both approaches also recognise generation and gender as important 'fault-lines' in families, schools and work-places, along which there is a set of struggles related intimately to class struggles.

Connell and others (1982: 67-71) have emphasised the importance of the spatial location of families, schools and work places and they would regard the fracturing of cities into 'working class' and 'ruling class' suburbs as an important shaping influence on class relations. Edgar has neglected the importance of these issues. In the Latrobe Valley class relations have shaped the location of work, schooling and households in a way which is different to that of metropolitan suburbanisation, but just as important. Many of the features Claire Williams (1981) identifies in Open Cut can be seen in the Valley. The accounts of Connell and Co. and Edgar could be improved by a consideration of the effects of actual work practices on family life, and Williams has made a valuable contribution to this; as has Cass in much of her recent work. Indeed, there is an important body of research and theory which has emerged recently, relating to women's relationships with welfare, health, families, work, schooling and the State, which could be applied usefully to further research in our area of interest (see for example, Baldock and Cass, 1983: Burns, Bottomley and Jools, 1983).

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TABLE 1

SECV LATROBE VALLEY OPERATIONS[1] WORKFORCE IN SKILL CATEGORIES 1981

Skill Category	Number	Percent
Staff[2]	2,420	27.3
Skilled[3]	2,490	18.8
Semi-Skilled[4]	2,760	31.2
Unskilled	1,180	13.3
Total	8,850	100.4

[1] These are the people who extract coal, generate power and provide administrative services.

[2] Includes engineers, scientists, other 'technical' people, clerks, etc. security personnel, and 40% of this category are skilled trades people in 'supervisory' capacities.

[3] Mainly metal and electrical trades (includes apprentices in training).

[4] Mainly power plant and extraction plant operators.

Based on Kinhill (1981: 9.3)

TABLE 2

SECV LATROBE VALLEY CONSTRUCTION[1] WORKFORCE IN SKILL CATEGORIES 1981

Skill Category	Number	Percent
Staff[2]	450	14.1
Skilled[3]	1,090	34.1
Semi-Skilled	1,050	32.8
Unskilled	60	19.4
Total	3,200	100.4

[1] Employed by SEC's Construction Contractors

[2] Mainly Supervisors

[3] About half of these are metal and electrical, and half are building trades.

Based on Kinhill (1981 : 9.5)

TABLE 3

GIRLS' FATHERS' OCCUPATIONS 1981

Fathers' Occupation	Number	Percent
Sales, Clerical, Managerial	9	7
Semi-Skilled, Unskilled	48	39
Skilled	49	40
Other (including unemployed/pensioners)	18	14

TABLE 4

GIRLS' MOTHERS' OCCUPATIONS 1981

Mothers' Occupation	Number	Percent
Sales, Clerical, Managerial	21	16
Unskilled	14	11
Childcare/Nursing	4	3
Home Duties	81	62

TABLE 5

JOB PREFERENCES OF TRARALGON TECHNICAL SCHOOL GIRLS

Preferred Occupation	Girl's Year Level						Percentage[4]
	7	8	9	10	11	Total	
Clerical	1	2	4	6	2	15	12
Sales	3	1	-	2	-	6	5
Traditional Trades[1]	12	10	21	13	6	62	47
Non-Traditional Trades[2]	-	4	1	-	-	5	4
Teaching	4	1	-	1	1	7	5
Childcare/Nursing	5	2	3	4	2	16	12
Others[3]	4	-	5	4	1	14	11
Did not know	1	2	1	2	-	6	5
GRAND TOTAL						131	

[1] Traditional trades included the following: Hairdresser; Model; Air Hostess; Animal Work; etc.

[2] Non-traditional trades included the following: Plumber; Electrician; Carpenter; Truck Driver; etc.

[3] Other Occupations included the following (numbers in brackets represent number of girls): Police (4); Art (2); Army (1); Dental Technician (1); Marine Biologist (1); Computer Operator (1); Actress (1); Photographer (1); Printer (1); Writer (1).

[4] Percentages shown to nearest whole number

Parents' choice of school in the ACT

Caroline Coombs, Janet Hunt & Dennis Strand
ACT Schools Authority

This paper reports on work in progress at the ACT Schools Authority on the reasons parents choose particular schools for their children. The paper outlines first the background to the study and some information about the government school system in the ACT. After an initial phase of interviews with key people, two pilot studies were conducted, one of choice of primary school, the other of choice of secondary school. Details of both studies are provided, and some issues arising from these studies are outlined. The final section of the paper deals with preliminary results from one section of the major study, parents' choice of a government primary school.

Background

In February 1981 the Australian Education Council (AEC) expressed interest in mounting a study whose aim was to analyze enrolment patterns in Australian schools. As a result, during the last half of 1982, the ACT Schools Authority (ACTSA) and the State Departments ofEducation participated in a quantitative analysis of enrolment patterns in each of the Australian educational systems. The analysis was largely descriptive, being based on census information, and did not attempt to explain factors underlying parents' choice of schools.

The present study is part of a series of studies focussing upon the reasons underlying school choice being undertaken by Education Departments and Authorities which arise from this initiative. In the case of the ACT study the ACTSA is conducting the study in cooperation with the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT. The study is funded by the Commonwealth Schools Commission.

The focus of the ACT study is upon factors underlying parental choice of school rather than factors influencing overall enrolment patterns in the ACT. It is envisaged that the ACT study will provide information to ACT schools which will assist them in making decisions about their future directions and development.

Overview of the ACT Government School System

Government schools in the ACT are not zoned. Therefore, ACT parents are free to choose the school they deem as most appropriate for their child or children. As long as there is a place available at the chosen school children from any part of the ACT are able to attend. However, each ACT suburb has a government school designated as the priority enrolment school for students living in that suburb. This means that all students from a given suburb are assured of a place in the local school.

This situation applies at the primary, high school (year 7-10), and college (years 11 and 12) levels. ACT children start primary school in Kindergarten at approximately age 5 and finish primary school in year 6. They begin high school in year 7 at approximately age 12 and leave in year 10. Years 11 and 12 are completed at secondary colleges which are separate from high schools. Therefore, there are three major choice points for parents, and at later levels students, concerning choice of school. Each year a growing number of parents and students are choosing government schools other than the local school. For example, at the primary level approximately 8.4% of students did not attend their local government primary school in 1978; in 1980 the figure was approximately 13.1% and in 1982 the figure was approximately 15.6%.

Aims of the Study

The aim of the ACT study is to identify at the system wide level factors influencing school choice and to relate such factors within an overall decision-making model. The model being developed includes five sets of variables:

- Background characteristics of parents
- Societal and community characteristics
- Parents' opinions about educational opportunities in terms of school resources, school aims, school process and school outcomes
- Structural factors. (Non-educational e.g. location, cost)
- Types of schools selected by parents

It should be noted that the study is a qualitative analysis of the issues related to school choice. Furthermore, it is largely exploratory as there is no available information concerning the reasons parents in the ACT choose particular primary or secondary schools.

Phase 1. Clarification of Research Issues

Phase 1 sought the ideas of people who would have an interest in the outcome of the study, who had particular expertise to offer to the design of the study, and, who were representative of groups likely to be involved. Views were sought from representatives of the following organizations and groups in unstructured interviews:

ACT Council of Parents' and Citizens' Associations
Other Parents
ACT Teachers' Federation
Schools Commission
Catholic Education Office
Department of Education
Government school principals
Canberra CAE, Lecturers in Education

From the interviews with these groups as well as consideration of previous research a broad range of issues was identified. These issues have been summarized in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 in here

Phase 2. Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies focussing on government schools were conducted towards the end of 1982. One focussed on government primary school choice, the other focussed on government high school choice.

The aims of the pilot studies were:

(1) To understand better what parents are seeking from primary and secondary schooling

(2) To understand better the school "choice" process

(3) To explore the sources of information available to parents

(4) To explore how well parents are informed about secondary schooling. (Secondary pilot study only).

Primary School Pilot Study

For the purposes of identifying sample schools, ACT government primary schools were classified in two ways:

(a) according to percentage of out-of-area enrolments. High out-of-area enrolments: where significant numbers of students come from out of the priority enrolment area, or, low out-of-area enrolment: where the school population largely comes from the school's priority enrolment area.

(b) according to architecture - open-plan, traditional, flexible or dual architecture.

Four primary schools were then selected to represent each of the four major combinations of school types evident in ACT government schools.

School	A	High out-of-area enrolments;	open-plan
	B	Low out-of-area enrolments;	open-plan
	C	High out-of-area enrolments;	traditional
	D	Low out-of-area enrolments;	traditional

High or low in or out of area enrolments were considered to be important by the researchers because they indicate particular patterns of choice.

All parents of first born Kindergarten to second grade students from each school became the sample. A total of 195 families were surveyed for this part of the study. Previous research (Erickson and Kamin 1980) indicates parents tend to choose a school for the first born child which then becomes the family school for siblings.

Data Collection

Because it was investigatory research an open-ended self-administered questionnaire was used. This allowed parents to answer questions using their own language and terms and to more accurately record their views, thoughts, perceptions or concerns than a structured questionnaire would have. Figure 2 details the variables about which information was sought from parents at the primary school level. The overall response rate was 79.0%.

FIGURE 2 in here

Some Issues Identified

The results of the primary school pilot study indicate that by far the most important reason for choice is the locality of the primary school. That is, it is generally the local school which is within safe walking or cycling distance from home, or, it may be an out-of-area school which parents pass on their way to work or to which there is a direct school bus route from home.

Other major considerations parents expressed were, in order of frequency of comment: teachers at the chosen school were responsible, committed professionals; the child's friends from the neighbourhood or pre-school were attending the chosen school; the chosen school had traditional teaching methods; parents' choice was limited financially; the discipline at the chosen school was clear, consistent, well-handled and enforced; to avoid open plan schools; the reputation of the chosen school was good, that is, parents had heard good reports about the school, the school had a good name, image and record in the community; and, the environment of the school is caring and happy, within which children receive individual attention.

The Process of Choice

Parents appear to seek different amounts of information about primary schools and experience different degrees of success in obtaining a place for their child in the school of their choice. We identified four patterns of experience:

(1) Parents who seek information about the local school only and assume their child will attend the local school

(2) Parents who seek information about the local school and one or more other schools, and who choose the local school

(3) Parents who seek information about the local school and one or more other schools, and who choose an out-of-area school. Child is accepted.

(4) As three but child is refused entry.

Secondary School Pilot Study: Sixth Graders' Study

The pilot study of choice of high schools coincided with the period of a major review of government high schools in the ACT. On request from the Review Committee this study was expanded somewhat more than had originally been intended so that information gained could be made available to that committee. The target population for this study was parents of students in sixth grade, who would be considering a high school for their child in 1983. For this part of the study Dr. Cherry Collins of Canberra CAE acted as the major researcher, with the cooperation of the ACTSA Evaluation and Research Section.

To obtain the sample of parents all ACT government primary schools were stratified according to two selection criteria:

(1) the socio economic status of the priority enrolment area as determined by 1981 Census data on income levels for each suburb

(2) the locality of the school, defined in terms of whether the school was located in inner or outer Canberra.

Both characteristics were considered by the researchers as likely to be important factors underlying parents' opinions about high schools (years 7 - 10) in the ACT. Fourteen primary schools were selected in accordance with the two selection criteria.

A random sample of twenty parents whose eldest child was in year 6 was drawn from each of the fourteen schools. These 280 parents had arrived at the second choice point for their child's schooling and were about to choose a high school for their first born child.

Data Collection

Information was gathered in two ways. Firstly, a sample of 208 parents was mailed a self-administered open-ended questionnaire. The remaining 72 parents were interviewed by means of an open-ended interview schedule which duplicated the questions on the questionnaire but probed further. Figure 3 details the variables about which information was sought from parents for the Sixth Graders Study. The overall response rate was 80.0%.

FIGURE 3 in here

Some Issues Identified

Parents appeared to use three kinds of criteria to choose a secondary school: practical considerations (i.e. location and cost), considerations relating to the child as a person (including the child's wishes and friends more often than the child's talents and interests), and quality of school considerations (i.e. discipline, curriculum, academic standards and reputation).

The findings suggest parents asked one set of questions which dealt with matters beyond any school's influence and another set of questions of potential schools once they had narrowed down the field. The general questions asked were:

Which schools are practical possibilities?
Where does my child want to go to school?
What particular talents and weaknesses does my child have?

The questions asked of schools were:
What is this school's reputation?
- does it give a "good" education/have high academic standards?
- does it maintain order so that it can be a socially safe and educationally productive environment for my child?

Is this school strong in core secondary subjects my child needs/wants?

Figure 4 details the findings of considerations of parents when choosing a secondary school.

FIGURE 4 in here

Sources of Information

There is a variety of sources of information about secondary schools available to parents. Parents were asked to indicate to what extent they had found out about secondary schools from seven possible sources. Figure 5 details the findings.

FIGURE 5 in here

The findings suggest that most commonly parents 'narrow the field' by listening to friends, neighbours and the general community view of particular secondary schools. Only 16 percent had obtained written information on more than one school, only 17 percent had looked over more than one school, and only 18 percent of parents had talked to staff at more than one school. It seems that schools do not act directly as an important source of information on which parents make an initial selection of a secondary school for their child. This appears the case even though 56 percent of the parent sample indicated that they had seriously considered more than one secondary school.

The Major Concerns of Parents About Their Child's Secondary School Years

Parents were asked a direct, open question about their concerns: What are your major concerns about your child's years in high school? Figure 6 classifies the most frequent kinds of matters mentioned by parents.

FIGURE 6 in here

Very few parents had no concerns. These years were seen as important and as years of some anxiety to parents while children grew beyond their easy influence. The percentages expressing certain concerns were very high indeed. Forty percent were worried about peer group pressures in high school, forty percent were concerned about their child maintaining a good work orientation while forty two percent mentioned misgivings about some aspect of the school's contribution to their child's education.

Mothers and Fathers: Interesting Trends Identified

Some preliminary analysis according to the sex of the respondent and the sex of the child indicates differences in replies which need further investigation. Differences, by and large, are simply trends indicated by numbers too small for viable statistical comparisons.

Analysis by the sex of the child suggests that in their considerations in choosing a high school, parents of boys tend more often to check on teachers' professional competence and caring qualities, the availability of sport and the physical resources of the school, while parents of girls tend more often simply to find out the school's general reputation in the community.

In their answers about the signs of a good school, parents of boys were more likely to mention individual attention and small classes as important for good schooling. They were also more likely to mention the teaching of good values. As a sign of a poor school, parents of girls more often mentioned open-plan design, while parents of boys more often cited lack of individual attention and large classes.

Turning to the analysis by sex of the respondent, in their considerations about a high school fathers mentioned good teachers, school spirit, good leadership and sport more than mothers. Mothers dwelt more upon the importance of caring teachers. In their answers to the question on the signs of a poor secondary school fathers more often focussed upon low academic standards, professional incompetence, lack of sport and poor student presentation. Mothers more often talked about lack of caring teachers and the failure to inculcate good values. Concern about discipline was evenly spread across groupings in both cross-tabulations.

Phase 3. The major study.

The major study is now in progress. It comprises three parts:

(1) a study of parents' choice of primary school
(2) a study of parents' choice of secondary school
(3) four case studies of parents' choice of independent schools

The sample of schools for the first two parts of the study includes government as well as Catholic schools.

At this stage it is only possible to report briefly on part of the primary school study - the government primary school section.

Parents' Choice of Government Primary Schools

The sample of parents surveyed was identified in the following way. Twenty four primary schools were selected, based on a stratified multi-stage random sampling procedure which aimed to include schools with high and low out-of-area enrolments, small and large schools, and a geographic spread of suburbs. All schools selected agreed to participate and the samples were drawn from lists of parents whose eldest child was in Kindergarten or Grade 1. Two samples were drawn. The 'ACT Sample' was drawn randomly from the lists provided by the schools, and included children from within and beyond the school's Priority Enrolment Area. Children who attended each school out-of-area were identified by checking all addresses with the ACTSA Priority Enrolment Area designations. For the ACT Sample 17 respondents were selected from each school. A special sample of all out-of-area enrolments who were not selected in the ACT Sample was also compiled. This was called the Out-of-Area Sample. Such a sample was necessary since the numbers of out-of-area enrolments drawn in the general ACT Sample was too small for any valid comparisons to be made between the views of parents whose children attended their local government school and those who sent their child to an out-of-area school. The ACT Sample comprised the parents of 408 students, of whom 92 sent their child to an out-of-area school. The Out-of-Area Sample comprised the parents of 119 students.

Parents in both samples were mailed a similar questionnaire about the reasons for their choice of school. Those whose children attended an out-of-area school were asked two additional questions concerning why they did not send their child to the local government school and how their child travelled to school. The total response rate was 75%, with little difference in the return rates of both samples.

Analysis is only at a preliminary stage, but some general findings can be reported.

The Choice Process

Approximately half of the respondents said that they had considered a school other than the one the child was now attending. Of these, two-thirds had considered one other school and the rest had considered two or more other schools. Of those who had considered more than one school for their child, almost 60% had considered another government school, 36% considered an independent school and 30% considered a Catholic school. Totals equal more than 100% because some people considered two types of school.

Sources of information about schools tended to be neighbours, friends and parents of children currently at the school. Some 43% of respondents mentioned these as the major information sources. The principal or staff at the pre-school, or those at the primary school were each mentioned by about 14% of respondents. Thus it appears that more parents tend to make judgements about schools based on the opinions of other people in their neighbourhood rather than on information obtained directly from the schools. This is no doubt related to the importance of a school's reputation in the reasons given for choosing a school.

Reasons for Choosing a School

As with the pilot study, proximity to the school was the most important reason for choosing it. Almost half the respondents in the ACT Sample said that this was the most important reason for choosing a particular school, and almost three-quarters of the ACT Sample mentioned proximity among their reasons. Naturally this was a less important reason for the Out-of-Area Sample.

Among other reasons mentioned for parents' choice of school, a third of both samples mentioned reputation, and keeping the child with friends was mentioned by almost a quarter of the ACT Sample. Fifteen percent of this sample, and a quarter of the Out-of-Area Sample mentioned that the school of their choice was not open-plan. Other factors mentioned by about 10% of the ACT Sample included the educational program, teachers and the caring environment of the school and other 'non-educational' factors such as the physical environment of the school, the personal convenience of sending their child there (e.g. it had after-school care, it was near babysitters) and the fact that it was the neighbourhood school (i.e. that by attending it the child came to know people in the neighbourhood and developed a sense of his/her local community, or the same benefit was available to the parent).

Of those parents choosing an out-of-area school, after the school's reputation, which was the most frequently mentioned reason, over a quarter of the Out-of-Area sample mentioned personal convenience, the traditional education program and the fact that the school was not open-plan. Other factors mentioned by about 10%

of the sample included discipline, the teachers, the educational program, caring environment, specific courses or activities available at the school, physical conditions at the school. Children attending out-of-area schools tend to rely very much on car transport. Some 75% are driven to school, or travel there by a combination of car and bus or car and walk.

Views About Schools and Concerns for the Child

There was very little difference between what respondents in both samples said about good and poor schools or in their concerns for their children during the primary school years. There is some suggestion which needs further exploration that some parents of students in the Out-of-Area Sample may have been seeking more traditional socialization and values compared to the parents in the ACT Sample. They also appear to have been seeking more personal or individual attention for their child. However, these differences are small compared to the overwhelming extent of agreement.

Points raised by parents in making comments about what makes for a good or poor school concerned:

- physical conditions at the school and class sizes
- the qualities of the teachers
- the program (that it be broad and flexible, appropriate to the child, that 'good basics' be learned and that a good overall education be provided)
- the environment (that it be good for learning and be a caring place)
- parental involvement
- school leadership
- discipline

In answer to the question on concerns for their children, parents expressed the following points:

- that the child learn good basics
- that the child's interests and desire to learn be encouraged
- that the child get a good preparation for high school or further study
- that the child develop socially
- that the child be happy at school
- that the child progress to the best of his or her abilities
- that the child develop as a person
- that the child be prepared well for living in society
- that the child learn a set of social values such as cooperation, tolerance, respect for others
- that a good education program be provided for the child.

At this stage a great deal more analysis remains to be done. Figure 7 shows the range of variables about which we have information.

FIGURE 7 in here

Apart from the need to examine correlations between many of these variables we are also proceeding with a series of telephone interviews to obtain more qualitative data on some of the issues which have emerged. For example, we are interviewing people about the issue of a school's reputation, to try to find out more about how people find out about and make judgements about schools. We have also completed some preliminary interviews on the topic of discipline, and are conducting others on the subject of open-plan schools. Other interviews will focus on people who chose between a government and a Catholic school or between a government and an independent school.

Conclusions

In sum, the researchers at the ACTSA are in the process of conducting a major study into the reasons parents choose particular schools for their children. Pilot studies of parents' choice of primary and secondary schools have been completed and the third phase, the major study,is now underway.

Preliminary results from those parts of the study so far completed indicate that many parents make an active choice of the school for their child. It appears that for many, the network of friends and neighbourhood acquaintances is an important source of information about schools, and this is reflected in the importance of a school's reputation in the reason for choosing a school. Proximity to the school, however, stands out as the most significant factor in parents' choice of primary schools. Far more analytical work is needed and will be conducted over the coming months.

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Secondly, we wish to acknowledge the support and cooperation of the Catholic Education Office and the Association of Independent Schools of the ACT.

Thirdly, we wish to acknowledge the work conducted by Dr. Cherry Collins of the Canberra CAE, who acted as the major researcher for the pilot study of choice of high schools. Results of that study are available in the following publication, available from the ACT Schools Authority, Post Office Box 20, Civic Square, 2608. Collins, C. Fordham, A. and Strand, D. Facing the Secondary School Years: Parents' Thoughts and Choices. ACT Schools Authority, Canberra, 1983.

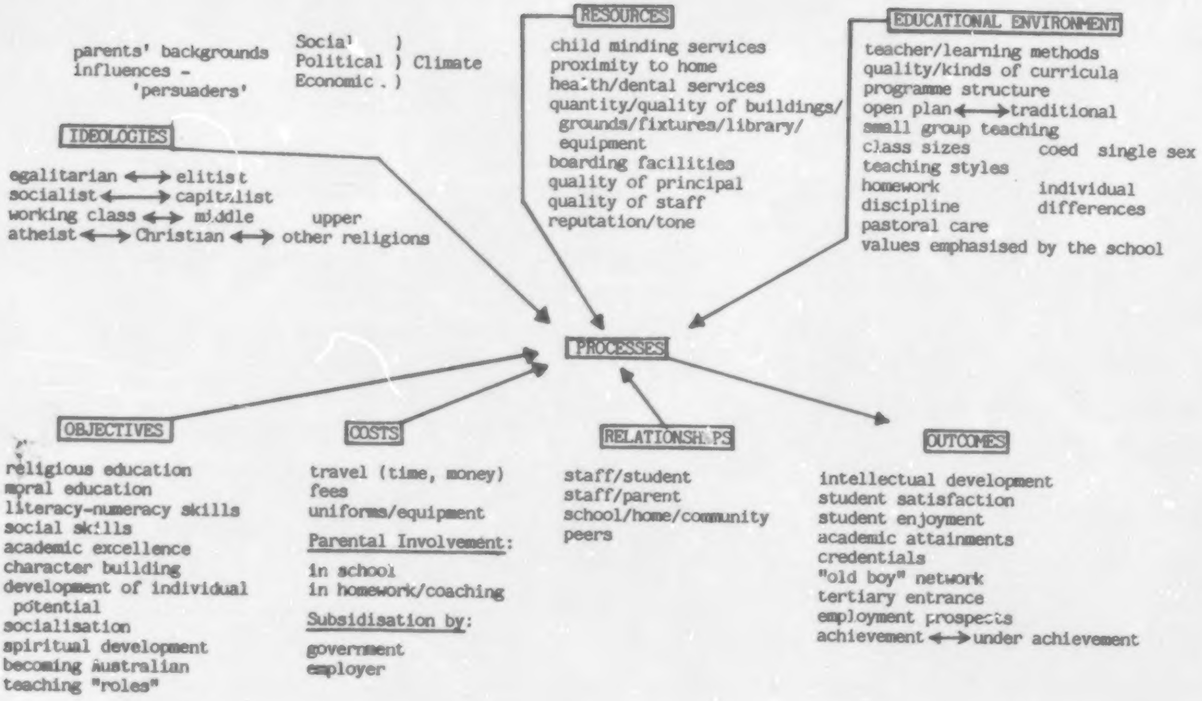
parents' backgrounds
influences - 'persuaders'
Social) Political) Climate Economic)
IDEOLOGIES
egalitarian ⟷ elitist
socialist ⟷ capitalist
working class ⟷ middle upper
atheist ⟷ Christian ⟷ other religions
RESOURCES
child minding services
proximity to home
health/dental services
quantity/quality of buildings/ grounds/fixtures/library/ equipment
boarding facilities
quality of principal
quality of staff
reputation/tone
EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
teacher/learning methods
quality/kinds of curricula
programme structure
open plan ⟷ traditional
small group teaching
class sizes
coed single sex
teaching styles
homework
individual differences
discipline
pastoral care
values emphasised by the school
PROCESSES
OBJECTIVES
religious education
moral education
literacy-numeracy skills
social skills
academic excellence
character building
development of individual potential
socialisation
spiritual development
becoming Australian
teaching "roles"
COSTS
travel (time, money)
fees
uniforms/equipment
Parental Involvement:
in school
in homework/coaching
Subsidisation by:
government
employer
RELATIONSHIPS
staff/student
staff/parent
school/home/community
peers
OUTCOMES
intellectual development
student satisfaction
student enjoyment
academic attainments
credentials
"old boy" network
tertiary entrance
employment prospects
achievement ⟷ under achievement

Figure 1: Summary of Issues Concerning Choice of School Identified from Phase 1 of the Study

Figure 2: Variables for Primary School Pilot Study

Reasons for Choice

- Reasons for sending child to current school
- Reasons for preferrred school - now
- Reasons for not attending preferred school
- Reasons why other people choose schools

Parental Views

- Comments on ACT education

Figure 3: Variables About Which Information was Sought in the Study of Secondary Schooling

The Overall Quality of Secondary Schooling

1. Characteristics of a good school.
2. Indicators of a poor school,

Child-focussed Concerns

1. Parents' concerns about their child's years in secondary school.
2. Parents' hopes for their child.

Knowledge About Secondary Schools

1. The extent of knowledge.
2. The sources of knowledge.

Background Characteristics

1. Parent Characteristics
   - . Occupation
   - . Educational background
   - . School attended
   - . Financial capacity
2. Child Characteristics
   - . Sex
   - . Primary school attended
3. Family Characteristics
   - . Family size
4. Respondent Characteristics
   - . Sex
   - . Relationship to child

School Choice

1. Schools Considered
   - . Type
   - . Locality
2. Availability of School
   - . Type
   - . Locality
3. School Chosen
   - . Type
   - . Reasons
4. Decision-makers
   - . Involved in decision
   - . Final decision-maker

Figure 4: Considerations of Parents When Choosing a Secondary School

Consideration of Parent	Proportion of Parents	
	%	%
Proximity	53.0	
Reputation	32.0	
General community		21.0
With friends		7.0
With known educators		4.0
Aspects of Curriculum	34.0	
"Good" quality		7.0
Choice/variety wanted		8.0
Sport (wanted/not wanted)		5.0
Specific subject wanted		4.0
Core/Basics emphasized		4.0
Other		6.0
Disciplinary Practices	21.0	
"Good" practices		17.0
Strictness wanted		3.0
Fairness wanted		0.5
Teacher Quality	16.0	
"Good" teachers		4.0
Professional competence		7.0
Caring teachers		5.0
Child's Friendships	15.0	
Finance	10.0	
Academic Standards	10.0	
Quality of "Education" offered	10.0	
Child's Wishes	9.0	

Note: Other matters mentioned by at least 5 percent of parents were: waiting lists and the availability of a place, difficulties of locality and the quality of the physical plant.

Figure 5: The Sources of Information About Secondary Schools Used by Parents

Sources of Information	Yes, for Several Schools %	Yes, for One School %	No %	Missing Data %
By personal contact with secondary school principal or staff	18.0	43.0	26.0	13.0
By talking about secondary school with primary principal or staff	16.0	35.0	34.0	16.0
By looking over secondary school	17.0	40.0	29.0	14.0
By discussion with parents of secondary school children	40.0	33.0	17.0	10.0
By discussion with ex-students or current students	25.0	33.0	26.0	16.0
By written information put out by secondary school	16.0	47.0	24.0	14.0
By picking up 'common knowledge' in the community about the school	46.0	28.0	14.0	12.0
Other	6.0	7.0	-	-

Missing data is included in the presentation of results to this question. We might well argue that the missing data proportion represents a nil response and could be included within the 'no' category.

Figure 6: Parents Concerns for Their Child's Years in High School

Major Concerns	Proportion of Parents	
	Mentioning %	Concern
Effort of the school:	42.0	
Gives good education		14.0
Stretches child/pushes child to work		12.0
Gets child job/tertiary place		9.0
Discipline effort		8.0
Social environment:	40.0	
Peer groups pressure/bad friends		25.0
Drugs/alcohol		15.0
Child's learning effort and achievement:	40.0	
Works well/keeps up		25.0
Reaches full potential		15.0
Personal development:	16.0	
Becomes mature, responsible		9.0
Develops self-confidence		7.0
Enjoyment of school:	16.0	

Figure 7: Variables About Which Information Was Sought in the Primary School Questionnaires

Background Factors	Parental Views	Pre-enrolment Factors	School Choice	Reasons for Choice
Parents' occupation	Characteristics of a good school	Sources of information	Number of schools considered	Reasons for choice of current school
Parents' education	Characteristics of a poor school	Adequacy of information	Type of school considered	Reasons for preferred school
Financial capacity	Concerns for child in primary years		School preferred - at time of enrolment - at time of response	Reasons for not attending preferred school - preferred at time of enrolment - preferred at response time
Respondent characteristics			Locality of school chosen	
Child's religion (Catholic only)				

Policies for families?

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Introduction

In recent years in all industrialised countries including some in the East European socialist bloc, concern has been expressed about the well-being of families and a debate has been developed about the ways in which the sphere of government should interact with the family. Universally, this debate has been referred to as one about family policy, although there has been nothing universal about what is meant by or what is to be the content or approach adopted under that general rubric.

In Australia calls for specific 'family policies' were widespread toward the end of the 1970s and culminated in a national conference under the auspice of the Welfare Ministers in 1980. Since that time little has been heard from advocates of family policy apart from sporadic attempts mainly by conservative groups, to revive the idea. At the height of discussion family policy involved just about anybody who was interested in social policy, family law and the social construction of sexuality. Conflict raged over definitions let alone strategies.

This paper attempts to identify the substance of that debate and to assess the worth or otherwise of the development of a focus on families in the public policy process. It reviews the main propositions and the most important value positions represented.

The changing nature of families and the changing social and economic environment in which they exist provide the context for many concerned about the well-being of families in Australia. The changing nature of families is evidenced in such demographic changes as increased divorce rates, a slowing of the growth in the marriage rate, a stagnant birth rate, an increase in family forms such as one-parent families and reconstituted families, smaller families and childless families. Members of families now have to cope with a great many changes in economic conditions and in value positions.

Consequently, the tasks of parenting have changed, the role of adults in caring for other adults, either through age, illness or disability, has increased, and the ability and opportunity for young adults to establish independent security has become more difficult, creating intricate problems for both old and young alike.

In a recent address to an Australian Council of Churches conference on Families in Australia, Edgar identified six issues that currently contribute to an uncertain future for families. Two of these he dubbed the 'economic juggernaut' and the 'community backdown'. (Edgar, 1982)

Economic Change

This 'economic juggernaut' provides possibly the major determinant of how well families can cope with any of their tasks at present. Changes in the structure of the labour market in addition to world-wide recession have meant that many members of families, young and old, men and women, married or not are increasingly unable to regard the availability of earned income as certain in the near and more distant future. These changes have been characterised by

- the loss of unskilled and semi-skilled work;

- the slowing down of growth in the service and information sectors;
- more restricted access to public sector employment; and
- increased proportions of part-time, part-year work offering less job security and fewer benefits.

These and other structural changes in the economy have had the effect of limiting full time, secure employment to fewer and fewer people. Specifically, those disadvantaged are any with low skills, especially the young, older women and men, migrants and many in areas of deteriorating regional significance. Participation rates for these categories of worker have fallen in recent years, adding to the invisible army of hidden unemployed. For example, the participation rate of males aged 55 to 64 has fallen from 80.4 per cent in August 1974 to 62 per cent in August 1983. (ABS, Cat. No. 6203.0)

Those who have been locked out of work must be added to the hundreds of thousands still hoping to find a job. In each year since 1978, over one million individual Australians have experienced unemployment at some stage rising to a figure of 1.47 million for the year ended February 1983. (ABS, Labour Force Experience, Cat. No. 6206.0) While the average duration of unemployment has increased from 6.5 weeks in 1974 to 41.5 weeks in August 1983, unemployed male workers aged 35-54 spend an average 50 weeks without a job. It has also been shown that the teenage children of unemployed workers, especially the girls, are twice as likely as other youth to be unemployed themselves, (Cass, 1982:26-30) thereby concentrating the effects of unemployment within certain families.

Government Responses

Edgar also spoke of the 'community backdown' affecting families. He says, 'there is little doubt that individualism in our culture takes precedence over community spirit.' (Edgar, 1982:11)

Among other instances demonstrating this point, he lists 'the mean public and governmental approach to welfare spending', 'the callous acceptance of rising unemployment until inflation is under control', and 'the pathetic blind eye being turned by 'traditionalists' to ... societal changes ... and the social, not individual, factors that have led them to come about'. There have been many developments in public policy that lend stark support to these contentions.

At the Commonwealth level a taxation and social security system has developed which has increasingly transferred wealth from low and middle income earners to high income groups. Since 1975, company and property taxes have declined as a proportion of total taxation revenue while personal taxes have increased accordingly. (Saunders, 1982:2)

Within the personal tax area, the burden has increased upon low and middle income earners while for those on high incomes, average tax rates have declined. This has in part been the result of the proliferating growth of tax avoidance practices only available to those non-PAYE taxpayers on high income.

A further burden for those families who do pay tax is the penalty they attract if they are raising children. Between 1976 and the 1982 Budget, families with children became progressively worse off while families with no children but a non-working spouse were increasingly rewarded. Saunders concluded:

> 'Whether by design or not, it is apparent that tax policies for families in Australia since the mid-seventies have emphasised spouse dependency rather than the presence of children as the major criterion for the granting of tax relief ... (Saunders, 1982:57)

The position of all those on pensions and benefits has become critical in recent years. Not only have the numbers in all categories increased dramatically, but the level of assistance has become increasingly inadequate. The Victorian Government Income Security Task Force has noted that more than 750,000 Victorians depend on pensions and benefits paid by the Commonwealth Department of Social Security, a group which represents almost 20 per cent of Victoria's population. (Victorian Government Income Security Task Force, 1982:1) The most recent figures from the ABS show that 31.7 per cent of all persons in Australia derive their primary source of income from government cash benefits. (ABS, Income of Individuals, Australia, 1981-82)

Cuts in Commonwealth and State spending have reduced the availability of services to families in the areas of health, education, and child care while recent changes in housing policy will take years before the extensive rundown in this area is rectified.

It is against this background of extensive social and economic upheaval that interest in family policy was developed. Edgar, when calling for an Australian Family Policy in 1980, cited the impact of the forces described above as the 'social causes of private disruption.' (Edgar, 1980:5) He argues that families will remain as the fundamental domain for 'forming attitudes, creating a sense of self-esteem, laying the foundation for adult competence.' He then challenges that 'anyone serious about preserving the family unit and about ensuring a bearable minimum living standard for every citizen, must face up to the fact that current policies are failing to guarantee those minimum standards for many Australian families.' Edgar finally concludes that:

> A focus on national family policy may be one way of guaranteeing that ... the family is not buffeted beyond endurance by social forces that we can in fact control.

Definitions of Family Policy

Exactly what is meant by the concept of a family policy is not by any means clear. Definitions range from the inclusion of only those policies that relate to the rearing of children (Dumon & Aldous, 1979) to the view of Kamerman and Kahn which includes just about everything government does to or for the family.

> Family policy is concerned both with the effects on the family of all types of activities and with the efforts to use 'family well-being', as an objective or as a source of goals and standards in developing public policy. (Kamerman & Kahn, 1978:3-4)

Kamerman and Kahn further typify family policy as having been used in three ways:

- as a field
- as an instrument or rationale
- as a perspective or criterion.

Family policy as a 'field' describes those things that government chooses to put into a package and say this is our family policy program. Included would be such policies as child or family allowances, the laws of marriage, divorce, abortion, etc., those social services associated with child welfare or health. Many European countries adopt this approach. Kamerman and Kahn regard it as restricted in that many other areas of policy affect families, yet are not recognised as doing so with this approach.

The second use of family policy has been as an 'instrument' or 'rationale' for policies not necessarily aimed directly at the well-being of families. Accordingly, societies have identified goals which need not have direct relevance to the family but require some sort of behaviour on the part of the family or family members for goal attainment. Family policy then becomes the rubric covering these policies. Family policy in this context may be seen as a form of social control. Kamerman and Kahn see labour market policy as being the most important, long-standing and familiar illustration in this field. Feminists have identified family policy as a recurring and powerful instrument in maintaining and furthering the social and economic subjugation of women.

The third definition of family policy is its use as 'perspective' or 'criterion' for social policy choice. Such an approach could apply to all policy areas and suggests the use of family well-being as an outcome for assessing the consequences of policies generally.

Family Policies Over Time

The identification of families as a focus for policy has not been confined to this past decade alone.

Kahn explains that the current concern represents a 'third wave of interest in family policy as an organising principle for conscious societal action.'

> The first began during the early 1930s, and carried to the period immediately after World War II. The second had its roots in the 1960s, but did not reach full international consciousness until the 1970s. The third was identifiable in the 1970s and continues. In each case population and/or labour force concerns provided the initial impetus, and income redistribution to favour families with children was the major instrument. Indeed, until recently, the terms 'population policy' and 'family policy' were often interchanged and confused. (Kahn, 1980:2)

Cass has traced the threads of family policy in Australia back to the beginning of the century. (Cass, 1982:10-19) Here, as in Europe and America, pronatalism has always been somewhere close to the surface at all times, if not the dominant theme. According to Cass, in the period 1900-1941 pronatalist policies took the forms of attempts to limit the control of fertility by restricting the availability of contraception and making abortion illegal, encouraging immigration, and the supplementing of wages by the introduction of family endowments in the 1930s. There was also some concern to reduce income inequalities between families.

The years between 1942 and 1948 saw families identified as the deserving recipients of the rewards of the reconstruction period. Income maintenance measures were introduced and activity greatly expanded to provide social services in the fields of health, housing and education. Again, pronatalism was a dominant motivation and child endowment measures were increased to ensure horizontal redistribution of incomes from families without children to those with.

The years 1970-1982 were characterised by two almost completely contradictory periods. The first, up to 1975, saw a rebirth of Keynesian expansionist policies featuring an increased emphasis on the social wage. Services in education, health insurance, housing and child care were extended to unprecedented levels. There was also a declared intention to reduce inequalities in wealth. In the period 1975-1982 all of these policies were reversed and family policy has featured increased pressures to move married women out of the labour force, reduced social services forcing greater reliance on the private resources of families, the reduction of wage income and the deterioration of income security provision except for some age and veterans pensions.

While it is too early to assess the impact the advent of the Hawke Labor Government will have in these areas some ALP policies are aimed at reducing income inequalities, increasing employment opportunities for women and reducing sex discrimination.

Contradictory Purposes

Family policies have been used at different times to achieve quite contradictory results, many of them unforeseen. They have been used to encourage women to work and to keep them at home, to encourage fertility and discourage large families, to reduce inequality and to widen gaps in income distribution, to favour nuclear families and to discourage the establishment of stable households. A wide array of policy areas have been invoked including income transfers, service provision, labour market strategies and legislation regarding fertility, divorce and discrimination.

Traditionalist Objectives

Given the multiplicity of both purposes and approaches, it is not surprising that there have also been numerous conceptualisations proposed as to the rationale linking ends and means. At one extreme advocates of a traditional view of families in society have sought to promote the development of a package of policies which would benefit one family form, i.e. adult couples, legally married, with dependent children. Policies therefore would make divorce difficult, discourage fertility control, make family breakdown extremely costly by severely reducing income security, and reward full-time home-making by women through tax concessions and cash transfers. This package would be regarded as a comprehensive, national policy. Understandably this notion has been attacked as it denies the legitimacy of numerous other forms of families in the community and the independance of women. It denies the very plurality that characterises modern society. For example at any one time in Australia only about 26 per cent of families conform to the traditional image of two parent, one earner families with dependent children. Just under 40 per cent of families contain no dependent children at all, and 13 per cent of families with children contain only one parent. (ABS, Labour Force Status and other Characteristics of Families, 1979)

One American critic sees such policies as infringing on civil liberties. Barbaro warns that

> since the powerless are often the targets of public policies, policy makers will inevitably enact measures that will discriminate against deviant family forms. (Barbaro, 1977)

Sharing Between Family and State

Moroney suggests a different approach from that of reinforcing the separation between the private world of essentially a patriarchal nuclear family and that of public provision. As a result of addressing the issue of whether or not the State was substituting for and undermining the family he concluded that there was no evidence to support the belief that the family was giving up its caring function. He further concluded that since the State is benefitting from the family's caring function, families which are caring should be supported by a caring society and its social welfare systems. (Moroney, 1976)

Moroney proposes that the caring function necessarily carried out for certain categories of person - the young, old, sick, unemployed and disabled - should be shared by families and the State. He suggests that a wide range of supports including domiciliary services and institutionalisation be provided so that choices can be made between alternatives and combinations of alternatives.

Family Impact Assessment (FIS)

One idea that seems to find widespread acceptance among otherwise quite divergent views, is that of the desirability of 'family impact' assessment. Edgar has proposed a mechanism for providing the research needed to produce Family Impact Statements, as has Kamerman. (Kamerman, 1976) President Carter pledged his administration to providing a FIS for every piece of proposed legislation, while in Australia, the South Australian Government requires new legislation to be accompanied by a FIS. Rimmer has suggested three types of family impact analysis:

- content analysis of policy - this involves the clearer specifications of policy proposals, both in terms of the potential and actual target populations, and of the interactions of one aspect of a policy with other aspects of that policy or other contingent policies

- the specifications of anticipated effects on families of various policies. One of the major problems in constructing this sort of statement is how widely to evaluate the impacts, and over what projected time period

- ex post evaluation of policies as they affect a particular target group. There is no necessity to wait for a clearly developed methodology to emerge in order to be able to undertake valuable work in this field, particularly in the domain of the financial impact of policies on families. It is important to recognise that in some spheres, the specifications of such policy impacts would depend on the development of sophisticated social indicators. (Rimmer, 1980)

In America, a seminar of scholars has been working since 1977 to develop methodologies for examining family impacts. The Family Impact Seminar is based in Washington and states its purpose as:

> to review, carefully and in depth, the substantive, administrative and political feasibility of developing a process for assessing the impact of public policies on families. (Family Impact Seminar, 1978)

Perhaps in recognition of the potential for conflict inherent in the idea of an integrated set of policies designed to assist certain specific types of families, the Family Impact Seminar has developed an approach that aims for a heightened awareness of the impact of policies and the needs of all types of family form. It stresses that such analysis involves value judgements and assessments and states its belief that as many as possible of the underlying assumptions and agenda associated with such research should be detailed explicitly. Although value positions may be made explicit, the Impact Statement approach will not make the task of choosing between alternative outcomes any easier. The family impact statement approach, attractive to so many with conflicting views, almost certainly will not provide the basis for consensual policies to emerge. Nevertheless the methodology may, if developed, enable issues and the impact and the impact of approaches to these, to be more clearly identified and assessed.

Family Policy in Different Countries

Kamerman and Kahn have developed the distinction between explicit and implicit policies and have used this to examine the approaches to family policy of different countries. They have identified three types of approach. Firstly, countries with an explicit, comprehensive family policy include France, Czechoslavakia, Hungary, Norway and Sweden. Secondly, other countries such as Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, Poland, Finland and Denmark have explicit but more narrowly focused family policies. Thirdly, some countries have no explicit family policy and even reject the notion, such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Israel and the United States.

It is instructive to focus on the content area of the debate about family policy in different countries, and on the underlying concerns which dictate the nature of the substantive approaches adopted. In Hungary, the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and France, it is suggested that their policies are motivated primarily by pronatalist concerns. (Kamerman, 1980:3) Schemes to encourage higher birth rates, often by extensive income supplements, have been the major feature of this approach. Also in Hungary and GDR, labour market objectives have played a significant role in encouraging women to either enter or leave paid employment. In Sweden labour market concerns emanate from deliberate policies aimed at promoting sexual equality. Demographic concerns also lie behind some of the current concern about the cost of services to the aged in the United Kingdom.

In the USA a range of issues has been assembled under the umbrella of debate on family policy. Steiner has analysed three groups of such issues. Firstly, there are what he calls 'matters of faith and morals'. (Steiner, 1981:49 ff) Americans have long agonised over matters of abortion, contraception and what has been described as teenage 'sexual precocity'. (Kamerman & Kahn, 1978:467) Secondly, there are issues of care and support of children including income support policies for single parent families, the collection of support from non-custodial parents and the provision of child care. Thirdly, are matters of neglect and abuse which focus mainly on arrangements for foster care and dealing with domestic violence. Steiner's typification of these three concerns is mainly to do with the control of people's domestic lives and of the regulation of their call on State resources. The approach is in stark contrast to the equality of opportunity concerns of Sweden and even to the implied regimen of issues developed by Kamerman and Kahn which emphasises the reform of social structures which produce inequalities in wealth, particularly across generations.

In Australia the issues that have been most discussed in the family policy debate are as follows:

- income transfers, focussing on the taxation and social security system;

- the provision of social services, especially child care, but also other support services and general services such as housing, health and education;
- labour market concerns, particularly the extent and nature of married women's participation, and now the impact of unemployment; and
- the incidence of divorce, especially related to the growth in the numbers of one parent families.

Conflict of Values

While it is not difficult to compile a list such as the above, to find any degree of unanimity regarding the most appropriate emphases within each or the most effective strategies assuming some consensus on objectives, is virtually impossible.

It is this ambiguity and confusion of interests that is characteristic of discussion on family policy. At base, the conflict is derived from the very divergent roles families perform according to socio-economic status, gender, age, marital status and ethnic background. Clearly, families which have access to wealth, education, secure employment, adequate housing and so on, can build on these assets and transmit them from generation to generation. For those with limited access to these things the reverse is equally true. Within families, unequal shares of resources are common, with women and children most likely to be dependent upon the income derived through male earnings. (Edwards, 1981) Without intervention these inequalities between and within families will persist and become more pronounced. Nor is government intervention a guarantee that more equitable outcomes will result. Families with sufficient income to purchase housing have long been favoured by government policy whereas those forced to rent in either the public or private markets do not receive such benefits as tax-free capital gains, reduced tax for interest repayments, deposit grants and security of tenure. (Commonwealth Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, 1976) Families with males receiving high incomes and dependent wives and children have long enjoyed taxation benefits not available to two earner low income and one parent families. (Saunders, 1982)

Nevertheless proponents of views that have a vested interest in either preserving or changing the outcomes of social structures such as the family have converged on the importance of considering it as a focus of public policy. This may be because some see it as the lynchpin of the 'natural' order of things while others see it as resilient and enduring and at very least, in need of restructuring.

The three most dominant competing perspectives in the area of the politics of the family may be typified as:

- traditionalist/conservative
- feminist
- redistributionist/reformist.

The Traditionalist Perspective

The traditionalist or conservative perspective is based on five main tenets according to Rimmer. These are:

- The family as a bulwark of freedom against the power of the State.

- The family as the seat of authority, particularly paternal authority, to ensure stability and appropriate socialisation.

- The family as a community, with the emphasis on duties and obligations to care and protect its members. The debate about day-care for the young for example, and about community care for the elderly is essentially set in the context of whether the duties which are inherent in the institution of the family should take precedence over the rights of individual members, especially the right of women to work.

- The family as the procreator of succeeding generations.

- The family as society, a model for the organisation of other parts of society or indeed for society as a whole. (Rimmer, 1980:9-18)

Advocates drawing on this mainspring of beliefs are contesting many issues in Australia currently. They are active in opposing the liberalisation of abortion law and the laws pertaining to marriage and divorce, are pressing for more censorious control on the curriculum taught in government schools, advocate greater censorship of film and literature, are most active in the tax and social security debates pushing for policies that advantage families with dependent spouses, are generally anti-expansionist regarding social services, especially child care, yet advocate income transfers to families so that women can act as carers of the young, old, sick, unemployed and disabled.

Such policy packages have at their heart the penalisation of family forms other than those sanctioned by the comprehensive family policy. This is at least the impression given by the sentiments expressed in the following resolution from a conference in 1981 which called for such policies:

> That we accept the concept of the optimal family and accept the existence of the deficit family and that positive policies should aim to establish and consolidate support and sustain the optimal family and that appropriate measures be taken to assist families with deficits. (Australian Family Association, 1981:154)

The concept of the 'optimal' family is elaborated upon by one of the commentators on the resolutions:

> It is very simple - a husband and a wife who have children - that is a family ... Even the Bureau of Statistics of the Commonwealth knows that and calls it a 'primary family'. The primary family cannot but be a married man, a married woman, a husband and wife and their children, a primary family, a married couple having children ... Why should we try to talk about one parent families? There is no such thing as 'a one-parent family'. There is no such thing as a 'homosexual family' or a 'lesbian family' ... We may have a household that consists of one adult and a child, a biological child or an adopted child, or a child who wanders in from the street ... you may have all sorts of things, but to say that these people should be supported by a family allowance is again mixing up things and confusing the issue, because family allowances should be given to families. (Australian Family Association, 1981:132-133)

The Feminist Perspective

Feminism as a philosophy provides a critique of women's position in society that is all-embracing, affecting the entire organisation of society and not just parts of it. At base feminism seeks to reorder the nature of relationships both between parts of society and within each sector.

Consequently all the institutions that make up the social structure and the interrelationships between them must be examined in order to determine the ways in which they contribute to the subjugation of women. the family is then a key target, at least the family model that has, according to feminists, become the archetypal form, the most preferred pattern of living arrangements in modern society, capitalist or other. That model is of course the patriarchal nuclear family, based on marriage and supported by male wage labour and female domestic labour.

Adherence to this ideal of the family has led to an oppressive socialisation of women. The roles culturally assigned to women within the family are typically those of mother, wife, home-maker and domestic labourer. Women are dependent upon the wages of men for their economic well-being and where they are represented in the paid labour market, the unequal power and status relationships that exist within the domestic sphere are replicated in the outside world.

> Where there is cooking, cleaning, nursing the sick, minding and teaching small children, sewing, servicing men and being charming to be done - there will women be found. (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982:29)

The relationship between this division of labour and the needs of advanced capitalist societies is seen to be strong when it is noted that both domestic labour, typified as caring and nurturing, and the predominantly female structures of community care provide for the reproduction of future labour power through the care and teaching of children and reduce demands on capital to provide for the old, the sick, the disabled, the unemployed and the poor. Further, women have served as a reserve pool of labour to be called on when economic conditions favour expansion and discarded when times are tough.

The family has been judged as anti-social. It is asserted that all the worthwhile objectives of human interaction - personal autonomy, interdependence, caring, nurturance, intimacy, commitment - have been claimed for the family alone. All other forms of organising personal and social arrangements are consequently inferior to familial forms.

> Just as the family has been socially constructed, so society has been familialised. (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982:31)

Other institutions in society are expected to conform to familial concepts, even the national budget 'like any good family budget' should not live beyond its means. And this when on the evidence the family is clearly not the ideal generator and protector of positive human values. It reproduces class and racial inequality, it condones violence and isolation, it reduces sexuality to patterns of right and obligation and encourages self-interest and individualism against social responsibility and interdependence.

Feminist advocates in Australia have pursued such policies as more universally available child care, the adoption of the individual as the unit for social security payments, increased family allowances and abolition of the dependent spouse rebate, equal opportunities in the labour market, breaking down of sex role stereotyping in schools, families and the work place, the eradication of sexual harassment, liberalisation of contraception and abortion facilities, and clarification of property settlements upon divorce.

As noted, some feminist writers have explicitly made the link between low socio-economic status and discrimination based on sex. (Cass, 1982) The role of the family in generating and perpetuating disadvantage due to social class and gender then becomes critical to any reversal of these phenomena. The interaction of the state and the family is of prime concern to any strategies to redress imbalances in power. Analysis of the use of family policy as a guise to obscure class and gender inequalities is described more thoroughly later in this paper. A logical extension of the position inherent in much feminist writing is to abandon consideration of the family altogether or to oppose it specifically. It is argued that the continuation of the ideology of the family enables the existing maldistribution of resources and life chances to persist, by diverting attention away from the needs and situation of most of the members of families, i.e. women and children.

Much of the conflict within the policy needs embraced by notions of family policy is characterised by the contest between traditional and feminist values. this tension is exemplified in the following passage by Cass as she comments on policy developments at the end of the 1970s:

> The countervailing conservative response has been to emphasise 'family policies' which counter married women's incursions into the paid workforce. In many ways, the emphasis on 'family policies' in the latter half of the 1970s can be understood as an attempt to 'domesticate' the demands made by organised women's groups in the late 1960s and early 1970s : demands for equality in the labour-market and the work-place; for the right to control fertility and to share domestic labour with men. (Cass, 1982:19)

The Redistributionist Perspective

The alleviation of poverty has been the concern most basic to those who may be described as redistributionist and reformist. In Australia, the extent of poverty and its impact on society has been the subject of widespread debate in the post-war period since the mid 1960s. Public debate began with John Stubb's book, The Hidden People and the survey to determine the extent of poverty in Melbourne by the Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research (both in 1966). The extensive research undertaken by the Henderson Commission of Inquiry into Poverty in the early 1970s has been followed by a relentless stream of publications with three major reports appearing in the eighteen months to November 1982 - 'Passing the Buck' by the Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS), 'Living on the Edge' by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and 'Income Security for Victorians', the main report of the Victorian Government Income Security Task Force. While it would be inaccurate to assert that this entire debate was about alleviating poverty as it affected families, much of it has been focussed on the needs of children and of particular family types, particularly one parent families.

The focus of policy proposals has mainly been on the tax transfer system, although the provision of human services and broader economic policies relating to employment have also featured in the debate. The elements of the tax-transfer debate are complex and varied and each has been subjected to detailed analysis by advocates of many viewpoints.

The strands of the debate have been made more difficult to identify because many policy demands have used anti-poverty arguments (the needs of poor families and poor women) to support calls for transfers to all families and all women. There has thus been some conflict between ACOSS - which has sought to maximize vertical redistribution - and VCOSS - which advocates policies like family allowances - which do help poor families a little, but which primarily redistribute horizontally from tax paying people without children to all families with children.

Thus, proposals for the reduction of poverty among families with children have called for the lifting of both family allowances (universal) and children's allowances (means-tested). There has also been emphasis on the need to remove administrative restrictions on eligibility, extend the coverage of free or low cost services such as child care, health care and travel concessions, and to ease restrictions on the earning of extra income.

A maze of programs has been constructed gradually, mostly since World War II, but has come under closest scrutiny and modification in the last decade. Proposals for changes of a far reaching character were made in the mid 1970s involving calls for a Guaranteed Minimum Income Scheme. These proposals sought to greatly simplify the transfer system by replacing all, or nearly all, the separate categories of entitlement to income support with an integrated system of taxes and payments.

The net effect of all tax changes in recent years has been to reduce the real value of concessions for families with more than one child, the extent of the reduction being greater the larger the size of the family.

This has been noted with concern by many of those involved with the helping services, and has caused renewed interest in proposals for employment generation and reform of the taxation and pensions systems.

Whatever the technicalities of the schemes proposed, most involve the treatment of families to effect a redistribution of wealth within the community, and it is quite clearly the aim of some advocates of family policy to achieve this objective. One commentator, for example, is drawn to conclude

> upon closer examination, family policy turns the attention of policy matters from simply dealing with families ... to the social contexts. By that process it is soon realised that the family not only reflects social inequalities, but is also one of the major sources of social inequality. This has important implications for family policy, especially where that policy is designed to be interventionist - attempting to redress a distributional imbalance of goods and services. (Hay, 1979:28)

Equality the Issue

Of the three perspectives described, the differences really narrow to consideration of one issue only. Both feminists and redistributionists are agreed that basis inequalities in society, manifested and indeed reproduced by and within the family, should be eradicated or at least, ameliorated. On this question traditionalists are basically opposed, opting for the maintenance of traditional relationships both between families and within them. Kamerman and Kahn have approached this issue of equality from a number of perspectives. They suggest, after canvassing several options, that the least that can be hoped for is the minimization of the 'transmission of unnecessary inequality through the family'. (Kamerman & Kahn, 1978:498) Better still, recognising the resilience or the family and the high value placed on it, they state that

> the challenge of family policy includes the task of inventing means whereby the family may increasingly participate in the effort to assure 'take off' by new generations on a reasonably equal basis. The questions raised are: How may the family become an ally? How may the families of the disadvantaged be mobilized?

It is clear then, that family policy is a battlefield for a few quite basically opposed sets of values and a plethora of minor positions within the broader sets. It is even the case that contrary objectives may be sought using similar instruments.

For example, traditionalists might favour high family allowances to keep women from working or to obviate the need for services such as child care, while feminists advocate high family allowances to help break female dependency upon male wages and redistributionists advocate the same instrument to alleviate poverty.

The family has become the focus of policy proposals to bring about quite fundamental changes in Australian society as it has underpinned the rationale of proposals attempting to prevent and reverse the direction of powerful social changes already underway. The usefulness of using family as a focus for policy might then be seen to be limited as no unequivocal set of proposals may be identified as associated with it. The following section of the paper examines some of the more developed critical responses to family policy.

Critiques of Family Policy

Given then, that the notion of family policy is bedevilled with problems of definition and of conflict over both objectives and strategies, the question may arise - it is of any use as an approach to policy development? Two critiques of family policy presented herein, both deny its usefulness, and in the case of the feminist perspective, it is regarded as inimical to the best interests of women in families. The first critique attacks the family policy concept mainly from the perspective of effectiveness and efficiency. It simply argues that the objectives sought by family policy advocates would be more effectively achieved in other ways. The second critical analysis of family policy regards it as an instrument of oppressive social values designed to disadvantage low income groups and women.

The 'Futility of Family Policy'

In 'The Futility of Family Policy' Gilbert Steiner firstly identifies what he regards as the legitimate interests of family policy. (Steiner, 1981:9) His is essentially a residualist view in that he regards government action as necessary or desirable only when the functioning of families breaks down. He says

> Family policy has to do with the mechanisms for identifying family dysfunction, and with the organisation of responsibility in public support systems : decisions about when public programs will take up the slack and the conditions under which they will do so.

Preventative policies are problematic according to Steiner, because of two difficulties; firstly, that the privacy of the family should not be breached except where necessary and secondly, the diversity of family forms makes a general prescription for well-being unworkable. In his analysis of areas embraced by family policy Steiner traces the history of policy contests in abortion, adolescent pregnancy, child care, income support, child maltreatment, foster care and domestic violence. The experience of each area is characterised by conflict over values or strategies or both. In some instances there was no drive to resolution because of the lack of activist groups. In other cases, clashes between opposed yet powerful interest groups had prevented resolute approaches to solutions. It seems that despair more than any other motivation, has disenchanted Steiner with the usefulness of family policy as an approach. Its lack of specificity frustrates him, driving him to the surer, more familiar ground of a functional approach.

> I am impatient with the entrepreneurs of family policy, finding it a concept without a clear content; suspicious of politicians, bureaucrats, or scholars who participate in the movement without pinpointing its objectives; and doubtful whether family policy, no matter if described as comprehensive or partial, implicit or explicit, is a useful or practical theme. Its sloganeers might more profitably concentrate on health, education, and welfare programs to serve children in need or older Americans. In those programs the tools available to government are better suited to the job to be done. (Steiner, 1981:194)

Steiner appears to favour a redistributive approach but along residual lines. His stance is reminiscent of Australian liberals, advocating adjustments to social arrangements to reduce inequalities only where market forces and private agencies have failed.

Irresistible in the Abstract. Impossible in the Particular.

Steiner makes several telling points in his critique of family policy. His fundamental criticism is that family policy can only generate consensus when it is proposed in the abstract. He says that 'it is irresistible in the abstract and impossible in the particular, at once unifying and divisive'. (Steiner, 1981:200) He states that 'only the components of family policy are susceptible to legislative action or administrative order.' It is at this point that he is pessimistic as he regards the conflict that arises around any specific proposal as an impediment to achieving a policy objective aimed at assisting certain types of families. Nevertheless he appears to hedge a little because he also notes that 'family begins to bite' only when groups can be mobilised on 'behalf of a particular approach to some component that is reducible to government action.' The worth of Steiner's observation here is not that the concept is a useless one, but that it only becomes cogent when it is specific about which families it aims to assist and about which governmental programs are the target for its proposals. Family policy proposals that are general can only avoid conflict by avoiding specificity. As Steiner says, 'what starts as comprehensive family policy inevitably becomes selective policy after all.' (Steiner, 1981:196)

This 'selective policy' is of course what reformist and more radical observers have feared all along when comprehensive family policy has been proposed. However, advocates of reformist policies may utilise the rhetoric of family policy as readily as their more conservative opponents.

Hence, the equitable distribution of wealth and the provision of adequate human services are no less achievable as objectives of family policy than conservative programs which would see the costs of family dysfunction borne more by families themselves.

Steiner's condemnation of bland, non-specific family policy proposals is therefore accurate. His solution is, however, deficient. To retreat to residual policies that isolate families in difficulty and subject them to specific 'treatment' has not worked adequately in the past. Steiner himself, perhaps inadvertently, points to the potential of the family 'biting' when the symbolic power of 'family' is applied to a specific interest group and/or an explicit approach to identifiable policy areas. In instances such as these family policy will provide the backdrop for an often bitter contest of interests, as all important areas of policy must do. The results will be determined by political and social processes which will reflect these clashes of interest and the relative power of each position. Steiner is wistfully hopeful if he believes that the outcomes of competition over such fundamentals as income distribution, employment, housing and child care policies will be determined in any other, less messy, way.

Family Can 'Bite'

Policies advocated by Steiner have themselves proved to be both unsuccessful - poverty and racial inequality have continued unabated - and unpopular by Steiner's own analysis. Some way of increasing public acceptance of redistributive policies must be found. Some family policy advocates have proposed the focus on families as one viable way. That the rhetoric of family is both powerful and pervasive not even Steiner denies. That such rhetoric may be used to further disadvantage some families is also not denied. It is consequently not unreasonable to attempt to neutralise the potential for family policy to reinforce existing disadvantage by using the same rhetoric to advocate contra-directions in policy. The universality of the symbolism of the family enables it to be applied to such an approach. For reformists to abandon the power of the family symbol to neo-conservatives would be a strategic error. At worst the confusion generated by two opposing views claiming to be 'pro-family' helps to neutralise a potent ideological tool; at best the 'family' might be seen as some sort of Trojan horse allowing entry into an otherwise closed debate about the role of government in distributing resources and providing opportunities in society. Kamerman and Kahn do not propose family policy as the only or even the best way to proceed. They advocate

> not _only_, yet _also_*, family policy, and significantly so, because whereas many goals are individual many people live and develop in family units; and whereas concern for such units may enhance socialization and enrich daily living, to ignore the families may be to miss major opportunities and to create disastrous contradictions. (Kamerman & Kahn, 1978:499)

Family Does Matter

This last observation provides a further insight into the fallacy of Steiner's critique. To ignore the family as a context for social behaviour is to adopt a myopic approach to social policy. Steiner's alternative is to concentrate on functional areas alone, such as housing and education, and not to consider the family itself as a focus for analysis and policy proposals. The alternative units to which such functional approaches should be applied are only touched on in passing by Steiner. Ethnic groups, children, the poor - these are the collectives Steiner refers to by implication.

While there is no denying that consideration of these collectives, and others, has its place and provides unique perspectives, an approach which relied entirely on an analysis of children's needs alone or Aborigines' needs alone would be as deficient as one which based itself only on the consideration of families' needs. The family acts as an economic unit in influencing production, it affects the transfer of wealth or disadvantage from generation to generation, it is an agent of socialisation and it is the primary context for development of interpersonal relationships, a context that can be savagely brutal and destructive as well as enabling and supportive.

* emphasis in original.

To target policies on individuals may be appropriate in some functional fields such as income distribution but only against the background of a knowledge of the distributional arrangements within and between families. In some functional areas such as housing, knowledge of patterns of collective living, including differing family forms, is essential. In considering the aged, ethnic groups, women, etc., policies are always affected by the impact of family as well as socio-economic status, gender and so on. Family must be taken into account as it always impinges.

Conversely policy always impinges on family. For example, discussion about income security proposals revolves about the impact various arrangements will have on the primary objectives of vertical or horizontal redistribution of wealth, but also on the likelihood of the side effects. The labour force participation of married women, the incentives for families to break down, for more single parent families to be created, etc., are all topics exhaustively debated. As Kahn has plainly pointed out

> Whether one approves or not family policy is inevitable : if not explicit, then implicit - probably both. (Kahn, 1980:36)

Steiner certainly has similar objectives for family policy as advocates such as Kamerman and Kahn. He rejects family as a policy focus because of its imprecision and its inappropriate timing. His arguments support a strictly functional approach concentrating on 'needy' minorities as targets for intervention. The contribution Steiner makes to the debate on family policy is the exposure of the sham of a consensus approach to policy development. He points out that in the end choices have to be made and family policy becomes selective. Advocates of reformist policies favouring the same poor families Steiner would seek to aid differ from him on strategy rather than objective.

Family Policy as Anti-Women, Anti-Poor

Whereas Steiner regards family policy as an inappropriate means to assist families in need, Bettina Cass provides a far more damning critique. She has developed an historical and theoretical analysis that regards the focus on families in policy development as a means whereby fundamental inequalities have been masked and consequently allowed to continue. Her analysis is based on the premise that both class inequalities and inequalities based on discrimination against women underlie social policy in Australia and have done all this century. Drawing on Townsend and others she states that

> the nub of the argument is that state policies reinforce the domestic division of labour and serve ... to maintain the unpaid labour of women as a cheap system of private welfare services to the young, the old, the ill, the disabled and to able-bodied men; and to maintain the family as a haven which revitalises and reproduces labour power. (Cass, 1982:3)

Cass regards family policies as having been designed to favour specific family forms, i.e. formal marriage and nuptial children, and to encourage women to remain outside the paid workforce.

In the period since 1976 she suggests that both explicit and implicit family policies have operated in three major areas:

- the relationship between the treatment of families in the tax transfer and the taxation system

  - examining the development of family allowances and dependent spouse rebates she concludes that there has been a 'significant retreat from a policy of redistribution to women caring for dependent children in favour of fiscal support for men with a dependent wife ... such priorities signify support for the traditional dependency of women and for dejure husbands who maintain their own work incentives.' (Cass, 1982:31)

- the treatment of unemployment beneficiaries in the income maintenance system

  - this system is based on the twin assumptions that only one adult income need be replaced by the welfare system and that families should supplement the benefits of unemployed youth, 'taking no account of the class and family concentration of unemployment.' (Cass, 1982:32)

- reduction in government expenditure for social purposes

  - 'cuts in public expenditure for social purposes ... represent a significant retreat from the collective funding of social services which benefitted lower income groups.' (Cass, 1982:33)

Cass contrasts the use of family policies during this contractionist period to their role in the earlier expansionist times of 1942-1948 and 1972-75. She points out that 'in the expansionist period ... the family is constituted as the recipient of a range of collective provisions, and in the current period, the family is constituted as the provider of a range of services.' This reversal of policy orientation involves the privatisation of service provision. Instead of the collective of the state providing services such as education, health, housing and even transport, private agencies have been encouraged or simply left to make provision for people's needs.

In these circumstances who is doing the caring?

> there is an invisible 'welfare system' being activated : the unpaid domestic labour of women, who are called upon to provide not only the material and physical care but also the emotional support of dependent family members. (Cass, 1982:23)

She notes that the corollary of this dependence is the necessity for men to remain as 'wage-workers', so cementing the rigidly differentiated roles of men and women and of family and work-place. For Cass 'national family policies' have been used to establish an ideological position whereby the reduction in public expenditure for social purposes may be compensated for by the establishment of the family as the provider of services for the state.

Cass' analysis then leads to the view that regardless of the economic and social tenor of the times, be they expansionist and redistributive or contractionist and neo-conservative, the use of family as a focus for policies has had the effect of either obscuring more worthy targets for redistribution or of concentrating the costs of care on those whose burdens are greatest. In expansionist times she implies that instead of families with children receiving greater shares of resources, individuals of low socio-economic status and dependent women generally, should have been the targets of policies designed to eradicate the structural inequalities these groups suffered under. Family policy then was used to divert efforts in this direction. In contractionist times families with needs for resources to care for dependants have been burdened with the cost of providing that care thus relieving the broader community from sharing those costs. Family policy again has been used to justify this privatisation of service provision and to maintain and reinforce gender-based divisions of responsibility, further disadvantaging women, the providers of these unpaid services.

Cass has provided a far more powerful critique of family policy than Steiner. In identifying the use of family as a policy focus Cass has been more condemnatory than Steiner, in that while he saw it merely as an imprecise and unusable tool, she has clearly demonstrated its potential power to bring about quite specific outcomes, the maintenance and furthering of basic social inequalities. While Steiner shares the objective of assisting 'dysfunctional' families with family policy advocates and has strong doubts about the efficacy of the strategy, Cass altogether rejects such targets as the prime objective of social policy in the fundamental areas of income redistribution, employment policy and the provision of social services.

While Steiner appears to regard the timing of family policy as merely unfortunate emerging at a time of noninterventionist spirit, Cass has shown how family policy has become one of the basic tenets of constrictionist policies, being used to further load social costs onto those least able to shoulder them.

Finally, Cass does not overlook the consequences of deleting a family perspective from social policy analysis in the way Steiner appears to. On the contrary, the very basis of her critique depends upon an understanding of the inequalities that are perpetuated both between and within families. Cass is very much aware of the role of families in generating disadvantage and of the impact invocation of the family as a symbol can have in institutionalising such disadvantage within the structures of the state and the economy.

Are Families Responsible for Any Care?

Two points may be made in relation to Cass' rejection of the usefulness of the family as a focus for policy proposals. The first point relates to the extent to which the state should or is able to either provide all those services that are normally provided by private agencies or remunerate private service providers at a market rate for their labours. The criticism Cass aims at conservative forces which advocate the privatisation of social services is well founded as it is certainly the case that the more private individuals and other agencies provide such care the more likely it is that the cost will fall on those who can least afford it. Nevertheless, the logical outcome of Cass' discussion of privatisation is either that such care,if provided by the private sector ought to be paid for by the community, or that such services should all be provided by the state and funded through general taxation provisions.

In the first instance even if it were possible to cost out all of the direct and in-kind services provided to others by individuals, be they women in unpaid domestic settings, employed women and men in their non-paid time, relatives, neighbours, community organisations, clubs or whatever, it would be inefficient and costly, even if it proved to be possible, to develop a system of collection and payment. Such commodification of previously individually controlled labour would also be strenuously opposed by advocates of women's rights.

Further, if the state were called on to provide all such services immense problems would be generated in matching need to provision, containing costs and most importantly, in limiting the power of the state to increase its social control function. Rather, Moroney's suggestions, rejected by Cass, that the state and family share responsibility as necessary is a more pragmatic alternative to both privatisation and the outcomes implicit in her discussion. A focus on family in the area of the provision of human services, would enable both the role families may be able and want to play to be assessed alongside that of professional care-givers and the broader system of community-based care. An understanding of the potential for exploitation and the concentration of cost on certain types of families and on individuals within families, principally women but also unemployed youth of both sexes and older males, will also be possible. This will be so because of the warnings sounded by critiques such as that of Cass and also because of a critical knowledge of the nature of families in contemporary social settings.

Should Family Policy be Completely Abandoned?

The second point as to whether or not family policy is a worthwhile approach to social issues is essentially the reiteration of that made in relation to Steiner's critique, that for feminists and reformists to abandon the symbolism of the family to neo-conservative advocates is to jettison powerful ideological imagery.

Unlike some issues and some symbols, the family has application to the interests of both the left and the right. Certainly the right has begun to exploit its potential more vigorously in recent years and, if Cass is correct, has used it to advantage even in periods when social democratic policies were ascendant. Nevertheless, there is nothing pre-ordained to prevent many of the policies reformist advocates have on their various agenda gaining acceptance because of their relevance to families. Consequently adequate income security, employment opportunities, social services and other objectives of those advocating both feminist and egalitarian policies may be pursued, at least in part, from a family policy perspective. As Steiner pointed out, once family policy becomes specific it begins to 'bite'.

Indeed Cass alludes to the possibility of family policy cutting two ways. She suggests that there are both 'progressive' and 'socially-controlling' aspects of family policies. (Cass, 1982:9)

To argue for the inclusion of a family perspective in policy debates has been described as 'sloppy and reactionary'. (Barrett and McIntosh, 1982:16) Rather it is proposed here that to do so is realistic and productive. This is not to deny that the emergency or continuation of policies that reinforce the negative aspects of the 'familialised' society, may result from an uncritical acceptance of the notion of family policy. It is to assert that specific policies, promoting specific outcomes and opposing the generation of specific disadvantages may be directed toward the many forms of families that exist within pluralist societies today. It is also to assert that provided the social and economic conditions are generated that enable people to freely form and reform relationships that are characterised by personal autonomy, interdependence, nurturance, growth and caring, concern about the particular form of that relationship, is not very relevant to policy processes.

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Family policy (Beyond the definitional dilemma — An integrated approach)

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> 'Even if planners of social welfare policy expunged the concept 'family policy' from their discourse, public policies affecting family life would continue to exist and evolve under other rubrics, not always felicitously.'
> (Neil Gilbert I979:448)

The Definitional Dilemma:

In her select bibliography on family policy, Lynne Foreman (I979) points out that family policy is a 'definitional problem' compounded by ideologies, semantics, a concept of social need and a focus on legislation.

The 'definitional dilemma' is a persistent theme in the literature. Some recent examples are;

> 'If family policy is a useful idea it requires a definition that means something'
> (Kamerman and Kahn I978:9)

> 'Family policy is a theme in need of definition.'
> (Stiener I981:18)

> 'It is necessary to have an unequivocal definition of the family.'
> (Family Policy Task Force NSW I980:455)

In the editorial of s special issue of a professional journal on 'Family Policy' Neil Gilbert noted that the definition of family is one of the two critical 'dilemmas' in the disagreement surrounding family policy. The other being unanticipated consequences of social policy which have surfaced since family life re-entered

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the spotlight of public debate.

In 'Notes On A Conceptual Framework For The Study of the Australian Family' Brian English (1973:11-24) reviewed previous attempts to define the family and found them inadequate for describing the family in a modern industrial world. He found them 'prescriptive' rather than 'descriptive'.

In a critical review of the family in contemporary feminist thinking, Jane Flax dismisses the family as an 'abstract entity'. After indicating that it is extremely difficult to analyze because the family is completely intermingled with ideology, feelings, fantasy, wishes and reality, she concludes,

> 'In fact the family does not exist'
> (In Elshain 1982:223)

We find then that 'the family' finds itself with a wide range of definitions and non-definitions - each suiting the needs and ends of those who command the definition. At the political level the implications are obvious. At the research level the implications are challenging to those with a scientific imagination and to those interested in hard factual data. At the practical level we can all bring to the discussion our expert opinion based on the,

> 'unarguable premises of first hand knowledge.'
> (Tufte and Myerhoff 1979:15)

Given then, that the family is surrounded

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by a network of operational definitions reflecting a wide spectrum of value positions how can a policy analyst present the policy makers with a meaningful concept of the family ? Can we move beyond the definitional dilemma ? Is the 'definitional dilemma' merly a myth behind which society avoids addressing the paradox of the family as the 'crucible' of competence'(Edgar 1980) ?

Challenged by a tussle with what Berardo (1977) called 'a dangerous concept' and convinced with Rawson(1977) that a 'family policy cast in stone' would not sit comfortably within a democratic society; the writer searched for a key to this complex issue.

Family Policy - Philosophy and Framework For Action:

Brian English pointed out that a full scale analysis of family policy in Australia must be directed at clarifying the philosophical concepts underlying the formulation of family policy satements, programs and the social conditions which maintain and improve the condition of families . (1975:3). This tall order clearly calls for an integrative approach if one is to heed Margaret Wynn's advice that,

> 'any family policy worthy of the name can only be a consequence of an attempt, however inadequate, to study all the interests of families in relation to one another'
> (1972:269)

In order to provide a filter through which policy analyists can screen the vast amount of family policy literature it was decided to undertake a content analysis

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of the literature over the past twenty years and to develop as many family policy models as possible. The task is ongoing; however I can report to this the first Australian Family Research Conference, that fifty such models have been formulated.

Each model required a philosophy and a framework for action, otherwise the family policy position would be no more than a pure moral exhortation or a specific functional program developed out of context of the needs of families. Basic assumptions about the family and core concepts were subsumed under the rubric PHILOSOPHY. The stated goals, elements of the policy and the specific plans for implementation were subsumed under the heading FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION. In addition , because the eternal policy questions who ? said what ? when ? where ? , need to be kept in mind it was necessary to identify the person or organization (PROPONENT) and document (PRODUCT) from which the model was developed.

In summary the research was designed to present policy makers with a complex area reduced to highlight the following elements;

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

(PROPONENT).........(year) (PRODUCT)......(document)

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
Assumptions	Core Concepts	Goals	Process	Implementation
.....	......	...	...	....

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An analysis of the assumptions, core concepts goals, processes and implementation strategies of the family policy models reflects the material covered in Kahn and Kamerman's study of family policy in fourteen countries (1978); their writings on work and families in industrial societies (1979) and their analysis of parenting in an unresponsive society (1980). An analysis of the models developed from a review of overseas material reveals a variety of policy positions such as;

- The need for a balance between dependence on outside intervention, self-reliance and parental responsibility through economic and non-economic policies that are responsive to social change.
  (United Nations 1961)
- responsible government policy for the family must be active, comprehensive and habilitative rather than residual, restrictive and rehabilitative; recognise diversity as a source of vitality and energy.
  (Cohen/Connery 1967)
- the principal function of the family is the rearing of children
  (Foote/Hill 1979)
- family policy is concerned with the many changes that are made each year to the ground rules of society as they affect families; the law as it affects family and the transfer of resources to investment in future generations.
  (Margaret Wynn 1972)
- (*) see p 8 the family is the major educational institution in our society and there is a need to emphasize the role of the family in educational processes
  (Schaefer 1972)
- Flexible and developmental policies are needed which enable individuals to overcome stalemated life chances throughout the life cycle
  (Hirschorn 1977)

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- In a technological age the family assumes a greater importance than before in human development and social change. It is more than a dependent variable and is capable of acting as an independent variable with other systems.
  Family values, ideology and independence will only exist effectively in a society willing to give some support and political decisions directing economic, political and social service for family values.
  (Irving 1976)

- Federal government can take the lead in developing a comprehensive national policy for children and adults through family economic support services, national health insurance and child care arrangements.
  (National Research Council of The Academy of Sciences 1978)

- Important issues in the family sphere must be tackled agressively through a balanced and harmonious policy development using existing structures.
  (Rawson 1977)

- (*) see p 9 Family policy development with a focus on family functions and a recognition of the variety of family structures that exist in a pluralistic society, must compete realistically with the alternative of doing nothing or retaining the problem-orientated programic point of view of current policies.
  (Rice 1977)

- Family policy involves a process of educating political and social,leaders; developing an effective family lobby, and setting up adequate administrative arrangements (Family Council) to enhance the choices, opportunities and resources available to all families.
  (Houston/Mockler 1978)

- Family development must deal with the family within the context of its ecology through holistic, sequental developmental policy that involves a shift from the pathological model.
  (Kravitz 1978)

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- State intervention is necessary because the family is a fragile institution that must be protection that must be protected and because families are becoming less willing to function as the primary care giving institution - what is required is a balance of resources between institutional care and community care using the concept of the family as a social service as a policy framework.
  (Moroney 1978)

- Public policies which affect families are confused and contradictory - family policy must be formulated as a complex multi-faceted approach to key issues such as the relationship between family and society, social programs that strengthen families, resource availability and helping families overcome fear of government. Family policy cannot be simple nor mechanistic.
  (National Commission On Families and Public Policies USA 1978)

- The concept of the family as a social institution anchored in morality provides a basis for social policy that supports and clarifies the purpose of the family.
  (Setleis 1978)

- The obvious interest of the state in fostering happy marriage and family life contrasts sharply with the way in which family needs are unrepresented and often ignored in framing policy. Policies are needed that support, strengthen and enrich family life.
  (Brayshaw Policy Institute London 1980)

- (*) see p 10. Family policy in the context of Social Security comprises measures which focus on or affect the family unit and its members. Ambiguities and lack of consistencies in given policies are explained by an attempt to solve moral dilemmas and accommodating conflicting aims and values. (Christine Cockburn 1982)

Three examples of analysed family policy models from the overseas collection follow. These were selected at random and were developed from material by Earl (1972); Rice (1977) and Christine Cockburn (1982).

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FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: SCHAEFER DR EARL, Developmental Psychologist, University of North Carolina (1972)

PRODUCT The Family and the Educational Process, in: Families of the Future (1972 pp 26-43)

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
. a common sense analysis of the major characteristics of family care and education support the importance of the family in education process. . the family initially establishes the child's level of intellectual functioning, maintains it and the schools have been relatively powerless to change it (1972:29) . when we have found ways of training for family living and of strengthening and supporting families, the current emphasis on marriage and the family as a source of social problems and psychologopathology may be replaced by an emphasis on marriage and the family as a positive force for human development. (1972:42)	. The family is the major educational institution in our society and there is a need to emphasise the role of the family in educational processes. . The definitions of an educator are applied almost exclusively to professional educators - yet if parents are engaged in education, then they should be truly educators, should be students of the theory and practice of education. . we must develop the community as a support system for families and we must integrate the child and education professions into a support system for family care and education of children. (1972:27) . To mobolize the potential energy of families and communities we must recognise that all members of society are invited in helping relationships and teaching relationships (1972:43)	. develop a national family policy that includes but goes beyond family planning. . an effective support system for family care and education of children.	. a change from our current child-centred approaches to the development of an integrated child care and education support system. . an emphasis on human ecology and on the positive forces of family and community.	. National Institue on the Family (1972:42) . a national family lobby or family union - ie a coalition of organisations that are interested in family to support pro-family legislation, programs and opinions.

F A M I L Y   P O L I C Y   M O D E L

PROPONENT: RICE, ROBERT (FAMILY SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA) 1977 **PRODUCT** American Family Policy Context and Content, New York 1977, 39p

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goals	process (elements)	implementation
. the family is a resilient and necessary component of a society striving for individual and social betterment. . families are characterised by continuing change and cultural diversity and their is a need for families to adapt constantly to social, political and other systems and to the heavy demands mado by these systems on families . the development of a policy blanket for the family poses issues of cost and risk. Consequently, whenever family policy development must compete realistically with the alternatives of doing nothing or retaining the problem-oriented, pragmatic point of view of current policies - ie the need for a comprehensive policy must be compelling. . A cohesive, comprehensive family policy has not yet evolved in the United States and it is crucial to the welfare of both families and the society at large that private interests and government begin the long and difficult process of evolving such a policy.	. family functions is a better focus for the development of family policy because of the variety of family structures that exist in a pluralistic society. Rices typology of family functions are . expression and affection, . socialization & acculturation, . continuity, . interaction with environment and . consumption. . the family is a crucial social institution that functions both as a dependent and independent variable in a continuous exchange process with the larger society. . how can the larger social systems protect and enrich families, not harass and disorient them? (1977:99)	. comprehensive, coherent and explicit family policy as a basis for developing programs, services and activities concerned with the family. . the strengthening of family life through family policy development.	. Family policy should support individuals in making satisfying choices of familial life-styles which are competable with the requirements and commitments necessary for the maintenance of society. . Some guiding principles are that . family policies should emphasise support of, rather than substitution for family function. . marriage should be satisfying and when it is not, termination of the relationship is an appropriate alternative. . pluralism should be a guiding principle in framing family policy . ways should be found for industry to better support family life. . an income standard of decency should be promulgated in the United States for all families. . The Health delivery system should be integrated and should offer improved family orientated services.	. a 'family bureau' with the government as a focus of assembling knowledge concerning families and services that families require. . through a process of metapolicy which provides a safeguard against the trend towards isolated problem solving by defining a set of ground rules for policy development. . Administrative structures need to be designed which control family-orientated services of various kinds provided by multiple organisations. These structures must make possible rational administration, serve the particular purposes of the individual human service situation and seek to utilize citizens input.

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: COCKBURN CHRISTINE, Consultant to the International Social Security Association Regional Meeting on Social Security and Family Policy, Budapest April 1982

PRODUCT Social Security and Family Policy In: International Social Security Review No 3, 1982 pp 275-288

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
. The family is by no means in decay - there is emerging a greater diversity of family forms and living styles - 'what is happening is that new types of families have come into prominence and that there are significant changes in the structure and composition of families and in traditional family roles and functions (1982:276) . changes in family structures and roles, demographic trends, changes in labour force participation by women, the movement for sexual equality and a reduction of segregated roles, all impact on family policy.	. family policy in the context of social security comprises measures which focus on or affect the family unit and its members. . varying objectives and differences in attitudes, in ideologies and in religious beliefs have to be taken into account in evaluating family policies both within a country and cross-nationally. . ambiguities and lack of consistencies in given policies may have their explanation in an attempt to solve moral dilemmas and accommodate conflicting aims and values. . the concept of 'dependency' dominated the early development of social security systems and is still deeply entrenched. . the development of a system of family allowances came to be seen as an essential element in social security and is the most important instructment of family policy in social security systems.	. family policy or family policies aim at a great diversity of goals. . They represent a wide spectrum of values in relation to the family and reveal a range of different attitudes as to the repercussions on the family and on society.	. family policy as a component of social security policy. - family allowances - (maternity/paternity leave) parental leave - a cautious evolution in response to certain changes in family structures and roles. . interrelationships with other areas of social policy - role of the family in social polices of care - social security and taxation, social services, housing and employment. . move towards harmonisation of social policies	. The Social Security and Social Welfare Systems.

Australian material:

The themes, issues, value debates and concern with family policy reflected in the brief review of overseas family policy models also surfaced in the White House Conference On Families and in the Project of the OECD on the Educational Role of The Family. Particularly since the 1970's there has been a focused interest in family policy in Australia. It has not been possible to tap the complete range of family policy models because the debate has been mainly within the social policy context; however an analysis of the models already developed reveals the following positions;

- Australian standards for family and child welfare are fragmentary ; policies are needed for the troubled family which is experiencing either temporary or continuing difficulties; children who need temporary or permanent care outside the biological family. Services should be designed to enrich and fill out rather than to judge, control or even morally uplift .

  (Australian Counwil of Social Services 1972)

- Comprehensive family policy that includes support, supplimentary and substitution policies for the family.

  (Australian Council of Social Services 1974)

- (*) (p20) a variety of policies - employment, income security, taxation, health, housing and family and community services - responsive to the various needs of different family patterns and life stages and responsive to local needs.

  (Australian Council of Social Services 1980)

- We need a national policy for children and families to promote acceptance and understanding of the UN Declaration of the Rights of The Child.

  (IYC NCNGO's 1979)

- Henderson (1975) ....see page 15

- explicit family policy for Australia to provide a stable and secure basis for family life through financial support that includes - an indexitation of family allowances; recognition within the taxation system of the contribution of the full-time homemaker- sufficiency of economic needs and an economic climate in which no woman is forced to enter the outside workforce through financial necessity.

(Women's Action Alliance 1979)

- Australia can make family policy through structural and informational strategies; the 'seven servants' of family policy- (structural) child income policy, child-parent attachment, uni-sex career policy, kinship and social policy, legal policy, (informational) educational, policy for professionals .

(Beresford/Hayward 1979)

- Because family policy is ultimately the strategy for enhancing the welfare of the family, it is necessarily a broad and multifacited one aimed at the reduction of handicaps which arise out of the social structure.
A family-centered policy calls first of all for assessing the overall impact of social economic andphysical environmental influences and secondly for planning and programming that address these issues.

(Geismar 1979, 1971)

- (*) (p16) The absence of a clear family policy has led to inconsistencies between various government departments and their relationship with families. Family policy should enable the equitable distribution of services and resources to allow all families to achieve common social goals such as - adequate income, housing, education, health, recreation and legal protection. /here follows a specific framework for action and one hundred and thirty one recommendations.

(Royal Commission On Human Relationships 1977)

- National Family Policy should be shaped in terms of marriage and the family as defined in legislation and positively promote the institution of the family by:
  - affirmation of the clear responsibility of society to meet the economic, legal and social and cultural needs of those who cannot meet their needs,
  - amendment of family legislation to include the option of a 'marriage contract',
  - use of 'family well-being' as a fundamental framework for law and policies in health, welfare, housing, and income security.

  (Australian Family Association I979)

- (*) (p17/18) A sufficiently comprehensive and diverse family policy to encompas a balanced view of the family - a life-cycle approach should apply to families in their later years as well as to child-centered ones.

  (Walker Frank 1979)

- A holistic response by government to family-functioning in a complex industrial society, (framework provided)

  (Brown I980)

- (*) (p19) A focus on national family policy may be one way of guaranteeing that our oldest and most important social institution, the family, is not buffeted beyond endurance by social forces that we can in fact control.

  (Dr. Don Edgar I980)

- A national family policy should support all aspects of family life - it should not concentrate on the so called average family -it should consider the well-being of all types of families (aims provided)

  (Krupinski 1980)

- Australia needs an integrated set of strategies aimed at improving the family focus of existing services (accept ACOSS I974 framework)

  (Social Responsibilities Commission Of The Anglican Church of Australia 1980)

- (*) Family policy should be considered in the context of the co-ordination and integration of general social policies and programs related to employment, income security and human services;

  (p21) recognition of different family types;

  meet the special needs of children at risk;

  be based on the life-cycle perspective;

  aim to create the optimum total environment for the well-being of families;

  focus on 'families policies'

  recognise that Australia is a multicultural society.

  (Council of Social Welfare Ministers of Australia New Zealand and Papua New Guinea May 1980)

- (*) (p22) A coherent and integrated Australian family policy through the development of family impact statements - these to reach towards a holistic view of the effect of policy proposals on the family.

  Policy elements to include the concept of the 'optimum family'; increasing responsibility for 'mediating structures'; achieving social equity for one income families as against the advantaged position of two income families in taxation, health insurance and child care.

  (Goldsmith/Baxter 1980)

- Public policy is needed to reinforce the dynamics of the ordinary family unit - voluntary assumption of obligations, motivating force of natural affections through kinship, division of labour to the support of weaker members.

  Elements - family impact, statement, taxation, education, legal.

  (Chipman: 1981)

As in the case of the overseas material reviewed the Australian family policy models reflect a variety of concerns each underpinned by value positions. The reader is invited to inspect a few examples of Australian family policy models. These are on the following pages and relate to the material above marked *.

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY INTO POVERTY (1975)

PRODUCT Poverty. The First main Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Poverty. Canberra A.G.P.S. 1975 (Ch 12 Families pp 197-222)

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
. families in poverty are vulnerable. . family is a broad concept which covers a variety of groupings . the family has an essential role in child development. "Above all, it is the parents who lay down the foundations of the child's personality, of his emotional stability and mental health. Parents provide the child's early image of the adult world and of adult behaviour. On the parent's foundation schools build. The school may compensate for parental lack of care or modify the effects of parent's shortcomings, but the school can now entirely replace the role of the parent" (Wynn 1972: 29). . families need a guaranteed minimum income and a network of support to enable them to be independent and secure.	. low income can harm family life by creating stress, restricting opportunities and choices and by placing pressure on parents to devote more time to earning a living. . Although the family has primary responsibility for the care of children, society: - recognises that it must intervene on behalf of children when the family cannot adequately care for them. - Should recognise that the task of caring for children involves much of parents' resources (money, time, energy and skills). . Failure by society to provide resources to support the caring role of families for their dependent children results in economic and social costs to society. . policy making in the areas of housing, employment, transport and other relevant fields should enhance the opportunities for families to build up and maintain informal networks of support.	To enhance the opportunities for families to: . build up and maintain informal networks of support . have access to assistance when they need it.	. measures to assist families - Income support . Child Endowment . Pensioners and Beneficiaries - Supportive Family Services . Child Care . Home Help Services . Short term accommodation security for families . infant welfare services - Protection services for Children.	. Locally available supportive services such as child care, home help, infant care and short term accommodation security to ensure that all families have assistance when they need it. . guaranteed minimum income scheme.

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: ROYAL COMMISSION OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS (1977)

PRODUCT Royal Commission on Human Relationships, Final Report. Volume 4 Part V The Family. Canberra A.G.P.S. 1977 231 p.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	**core concepts**	**goal/s**	**process (elements)**	**implementation**
. 'Of all our institutions, the family is the most influential in terms of Human Relationships... Though it has had and will have different forms, it is unlikely that it will ever dissappear nor would we wish it to do so' (1977:1) . family life patterns and structures have changed . government policies and programs or the lack of them impact daily on the leves of almost every family in Australia and such policies influences the degree of control that individuals have over their lives. . the absence of clear family policy has led to inconsistencies between various government departments and their relationships with families	. the most important function of the family is the caring and nururing of its young. . family policy would enable the equitable distribution of services and resources to allow all families to achieve common social goals such as adequate income, housing, education, health, recreation and legal protection. . cultural diversity . The government should initiate a national family policy	. the equitable distribution of services and resources to allow all families to achieve common social goals - adequate income - housing - education - health - recreation - legal protection.	. action framework for the formulation of a family policy (1977:29 . Determine the scope of social policy. . Allow for the effects of demographic changes when determining such policies. . Expand community participation in decision-making at policy levels. . Take a national inventory of social planning skills and resources; plan to make up any shortfall. . Improve the collection of social data. . Co-ordinate social policies at the planning level, and encourage and recompense organisations in the public and private sectors to devise co-operative methods of working to the policies.	. one hundred and thirty one recommendations. . family impact statement.

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: WALKER, FRANK, Victorian Council On the Ageing 1979

PRODUCT Maturity, Discussion Paper prepared by the Victorian Council On The Ageing for the National conference, 'Towards An Australian Family Policy' Melbourne: V.C.O.T.A. December 1979, 11p.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
. Society's negative attitude of the Ageing process and the Aged: Society's negative view of the ageing process and the aged is seen in: - the increasing tendency to rely on institutional placement to care for older family members. - the older person's self-image - tragic waste of human resources to the community - a debilitating of the quality of life for an ever increasing number of people. . the role of the Aged in Australian Society Australia today is an ageing nation with a youth orientated culture and values. Old age is no longer viewed as an achievement and a natural stage of life with its own merits, wisdom and beauty. Australian society all too often ignores, rejects and isolates the elderly. . positive aspect of family diversity among the elderly There is an assumption that the institution of the family is ailing. Diversity of family	family - 'a unit of intimate, transacting and interdependent persons who share some values and goals, resources, responsibilities for decisions, and have a commitment to one another over time."(Bivens 1975) balance approach to policy intervention - Because family and other social institutions are interrelated appropriate welfare policy must not be confined to intervention in family units. It is sociologically not possible to separate the institution of the family from other social institutions in society. family policy - whilst there is not an overt systematic and consciously developed family policy there is certainly a convert one, ad hoc and developed piecemeal uncordinated reactions to special issues and problems. policy focus - welfare should be directed towards the support of individuals in need rather than simply to the family as a particular form of institutional unit. This does not preclude the channeling of support through a family or supporting a family whose members are in need, but it must never be assumpted that there is one desirable structure or way of family life.	. a sufficiently comprehensive and diverse family policy to encompass the following general principles: - recognition that any proposed welfare model must direct attention towards a balanced view of the family bearing in mind the relationship between external pressures and internal responses, rather than simply assessing factors internal to particular families as causes of problems. - the enhancement of family well-being and functioning and the encouragement of a minimum dependence on formal state services. - a life cycle approach family policy should apply throughout the life cycle - in their later years as well as to child - centred families.	. a community education to change attitudes towards ageing. . by an analysis of the impact of social and economic policies on the relationships and economic well-being of all Australian citizens - this should be an integral aspect of all government policy formulation. . a more balanced policy approach to the needs of the aged in relation to the present childhood focus. The continued emphasis in the Family Policy Task Force documents on childhood and the virtual abence of any reference to mature years reflects a lack of appreciation of the massive long term changes taking place in the Australian society and a concern with the treatment of symptoms rather than an examination of underlying causes.	. An advocacy Body There should be a national structure, that is an advocacy body to collate the impact of a wide range of legislative action, social and economic well-being (ie the human condition) . social impact of policies . family relationship research: The Australian Council on the Ageing places great importance on family structure, ties and attitudes, particularly in this time of demographic change. Any study of family relationships which overlooks the place of the older person (advantages or disadvantages of such) will probably present a most inadequate picture and add significantly less than otherwise to desirable community attitudes to relationships.

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: WALKER, FRANK, Victorian Council On the Ageing 1979

PRODUCT Maturity. Discussion Paper prepared by the Victorian Council On The Ageing for the National conference, 'Towards An Australian Family Policy' Melbourne: V.C.O.T.A. December 1979, 11p.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
structures and practices may appear to be weakness and as such problematic. Particularly so for the older segment of society such diversity is not necessary negative. Changes in family structures may be creative adaptations to different societal circumstances. __there are family needs relating to the Aged population:__ Arising from greater longerity and improved medical technology the extended period of family co-existence will be longer, therby raising intrafamily tensions. Specific family needs for the aged population are: - better personal communications and relations within family structures - differing housing designs for developing situations. - the need to consider the economic practability of maintaining the existing economic/wealth distributions when the numbers in one category rapidly unbalance the situation.				

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: EDGAR DR DON (1980)
* Director, Instute of Family Studies, Melbourne.

PRODUCT Possible Directions For An Australian Family Policy In: Report of National Conference, Towards An Australian Family Policy, Council of Social Welfare Ministers of Australia and New Zealand, Government Printer, New South Wales, 1981. (pp 13-25)

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
. Discussions of family policy need to be built on a knowledge of the current state of family affairs. . Family policy exists in the master symbols of political rhetoric. . Individualism is the central ethnic of modern capitalism. . The broad movement towards individual fulfilment needs a balance of co-operative care towards other.	Australia now needs a family policy because: - family are the 'crucible of competence' - family units in their varied forms have undergone remarkable change in the past decades. - a concerted effort is needed by the community to safeguard some semblance of stability. - social and economic changes are producing pressures and strains on families of every kind. - there are a growing number of families in poverty and functional dissaray, despite the general affluence of Australia. . a focus on national family policy may be one way of guarenteering that our oldest and most important social institution, the family, is not buffeted beyond endurance by social forces that we can in fact control.	. flexible policies . recognition of variation in family types.	Basic principles for an Australian Family Policy: (1981:23-24) . families should be given every chance to lead a decent life according to their chosen values. . no family in Australia should be permitted to fall below the poverty line (however measured) . every child deserves both economic and emotional security. If this can be gained through one caring parent rather than through two conflicting ones, support should be available to suit the circumstances. . parents should be taugh how to educate our future citizens; it cannot be left to chance and we cannot assume parental competence. . any interference on the part of public authorities in family matters should be demonstrably necessary; the onus must be on them, not on families, to show their actions are not harmful and they are clearly beneficial. . Bureaucratic means of administration must be eschewed in favour of more locally responsible and more locally accountable forms of service delivery. . power of decision making must rest with families and their communities, not with expert authorities alone. We must 'empower' the grassroots' by devising new networks of community support. . the family must not be seen as an isolated unit, but as always being inextricably linked to broader communal structures. In a sense we need to repulicise the family, to deprivatise meaning and the search for social understanding.	. flexible policies . family impact analysis

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICES (1980)   **PRODUCT** Preliminary Statement On National Family Policy Conference
ACOSS May 1980 4p.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	**core concepts**	**goal/s**	**process (elements)**	**implementation**
. Families are experiencing unprecedented changes while aspects of Australian society remain static. - inequality of income - discrmination . Policy needs to address these static aspects of Australian society rather than to provide general approaches and statements on idealised families. . The needs, opportunities and responsibilities of individuals are greatly influences by their family and community relationships. . The effort to develop family and community service policies involves a whole range of social value judgements (see p 2 for ACOSS explicit value assumptions).	. a variety of policies are required which will be responsive to the needs of different family patterns and to the needs of the life cycle stages. . The existence of a wide diversity of families and the sensitive nature of family life are important arguments against a uniform, comprehensive, national family policy. . There is substantial and growing interest in how public policies affect families and the community of which they are a part.	. a variety of policies responsive to the various needs of different family patterns and stages	. employment: development of policies and programs to provide all Australians who are able, willing and seeking work with the opportunity for socially useful paid employment at fair rates of remuneration. . income security and taxation : reform of the income security and taxation systems to ensure no family has a disposible income below Poverty Line levels. . health: the development of poicles and programs to ensure that all Australians have access to good quality health services supported by a nationally financed adequate health insurance system and a network of community health services. . housing: . family and community sevices responsive to local needs: . education: a system of formal and informal education which provides equal opportunity of access. Special emphasis to the needs of the socially disadvantaged. (either by income or ethnic origin).	Co-ordinated approach

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: THE COUNCIL OF SOCIAL WELFARE MINISTERS OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND PAPUA-NEW GUINEA (1980)

PRODUCT Report. 'National Conference Towards An Australian Family Policy' Government Printer New South Wales, 1981 127p.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process (elements)	implementation
. There is a diversity of family forms and needs. . There is a need to increase community awareness about family functioning and responsibilities. . Australia is a multi-cultural society.	. family policy should be considered in the context of general social policies. . a pre-condition to adequately meeting the needs of families is the co-ordination and integration of policies and programs related to employment, income security and human services. . there is a need for policies and programs to recognise different family types and to be sensitive to this issue when identifying those groups not receiving adequate support and representation. . action is needed to meet the needs of children, especially children at risk. . the integrity, responsibilities an independence of families can be supported by recognising that the needs of families will involve different family structures at different life stages and in different social conditions.	. families policies aim to create the optimum total environment for the well being of families and not just focusing on their material and economic needs. . the goals of families policies is difficult to resolve in specific terms because of the complexity of the issues. . the focus should be on "family policies"rather than family policy.	. The conference items that gained the higher overall level of support were those that proposed that the process of developing a national family policy be based on - the widest possible consultation procedures, - improved use of the media and channels of information and communications, and - improved children's services. . direct community involvement in decision making . . better co-ordination and contact within and between governments and the non-government sector . the restructuring of income maintenance provisions to take account of family size and age of family . a concentration of resources on poverty related goals . incorporation of the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child into legislation. . better conditions to be developed for work and home by Government and employers so that child rearing and children's well-being is not disadvantaged.	. a mechanism to be established which includes government, non-government sectors community groups and the divene interests involved in families policies. . family impact - family impact policy should have a wider focus than welfare programs or the responsibilities of particular Departments or levels of government. . attention to the interrelationships of programs and policies of functional departments in term of their response to family needs. - preference to the co-ordination and co-operation of existing structures rather than introducing new government machinery. - greater stress on localised services and consultative structures. . family allowances as a practical means:

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: GOLDSMITH, Felix and BAXTER John (1980)

PRODUCT An Australian Family Policy, in: Social Survey, Journal of the Institute of Social Order, Melbourne Vol, 29, No 4, 1980 pp 110-114.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process	implementation
. unique role of the family in the social structure and in individual growth and development The family as a central and unique position in the social structure. It constitutes the matrix within which the individual growths into adulthood, and, as an adult develops and passes on his or her maturity. The family is also the structure nearest to the individual through which the individual receives support in the various crisis of life.	need for a commonly accepted definition of the family . In formulating a policy on the family it is important to arrive at a commonly accepted definition of "family" from among the varying definitions adopted by various government authorities. Goldsmith and Baxter suggest that the following definition of the family proposed by the Family Impact Seminar, George Washington University is appropriate. Family "a group of two or more persons residing together who are related by blood, marriage or adoption". there has been calls for increased government assistance to families . There have calls for increased government action to assist families arising from public concern about the extent of family break up, the growth of one-parent families, the increasing number of mothers of young children in the workforce and the increasing independence of adolescent children from their families . the Optimum family The concept of the optimum family does not posit a particular form of the family as the ideal to which all families ought to conform, but,	. a coherent and integranted Australian family policy. . consideration of the concept of the "optimum family" as an element of a family policy. . increasing the responsibilities of "mediating structures" (Berger) - if family groups, community groups, churches, and voluntary groups are given back responsibilities for the care of the aged, the young and the handicapped, then it would be necessary to provide tax relief or direct financial support. . achieving social equity for one income families as against the advantaged position of two income families in taxation, health insurance and child care.	. the development of family impact statements - These would attempt to reach a holistic view of the effect of the policy proposals on the family. - They would resemble "environmental impact statements and would attempt to state objectively the effect on families of existing for proposed government policies. - Priority areas for family impact analysis . impact of health insurance on families . the effects of government programs on special need groups . taxation policies . housing policies. - Family impact analysis would outline . the effects of government policies on both dysfunctional and average families . long-term and short-term of intervention . various possible approaches and feasible consequences of each.	The implementation of a national family policy by means of better administrative structures Goldsmith and Baxter suggest the following three models for federal level: 1. Department of Family Affairs to group all the major functions under Commonwealth control. However this would be difficult to implement because the functions of same major departments such as Health and Education could not easily be divided between family and non-family programs. 2. National Advisory Council on Family Affairs - within the Social Security portfolio This could be serviced by a standing interdepartmental committee with a secretariat provided from the Office of Child Care.

...continued:

FAMILY POLICY MODEL

PROPONENT: GOLDSMITH, Felix and BAXTER John (1980)

PRODUCT An Australian Family Policy, in: Social Survey, Journal of the Institute of Social Order, Melbourne Vol, 29, No 4, 1980 pp 110-114.

PHILOSOPHY		FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION		
assumptions	core concepts	goal/s	process	implementation
	based on empirical data on human development it describes the family functions which provide the most effective result for all the community. . Dimensions in which the optimum family operates . secures the physical well-being and development of children. . provides a stable environment with dependable relationships within which the child's socialization and intellectual development can find impetus and support. . provides a fall-back supportive system for the young married during their child-bearing period. . within the context of the community- seeking specialised help and services where necessary and co-operating with the school and other community groups.			

An Integrated Perspective On The Family:

So far family policy frameworks have included an historical sequence which provides a useful checklist, but no more, a content analysis which provides a useful reference for research together with a synopsis of the philosophical underpinings and frameworks for action. These, hopefully will be useful for senior policy makers; however, and integrated framework which links policy with the dynamics of family living will need to go further than that.

What has been missing from the discussion up to now is an integrated perspective which will enable policy makers and professionals in education, health and welfare to to respond meaningfully to Australian families in the 1980's.

Although it has been missing from the discussion, an integrated perspective, like the proverbial crock of gold, has continually been hoped for. We have already referred to Margaret Wynn's plea to study all the interests of the family in relation to one another. Some other expressions of a hope for an integrated approach include;

> 'The preoccupation with family policy as a perspective focuses on harmonization of means and objectives, it stresses the large picture and interrelationships when public policy is often pushed towards the fragmentary and unrelated.'
>
> (Kahn:1980:422)

> 'Individual policy objectives which affect families are not sufficiently integrated or related to each other.'
>
> (in submission to the Family Policy Task Force Victoria 1980:159)

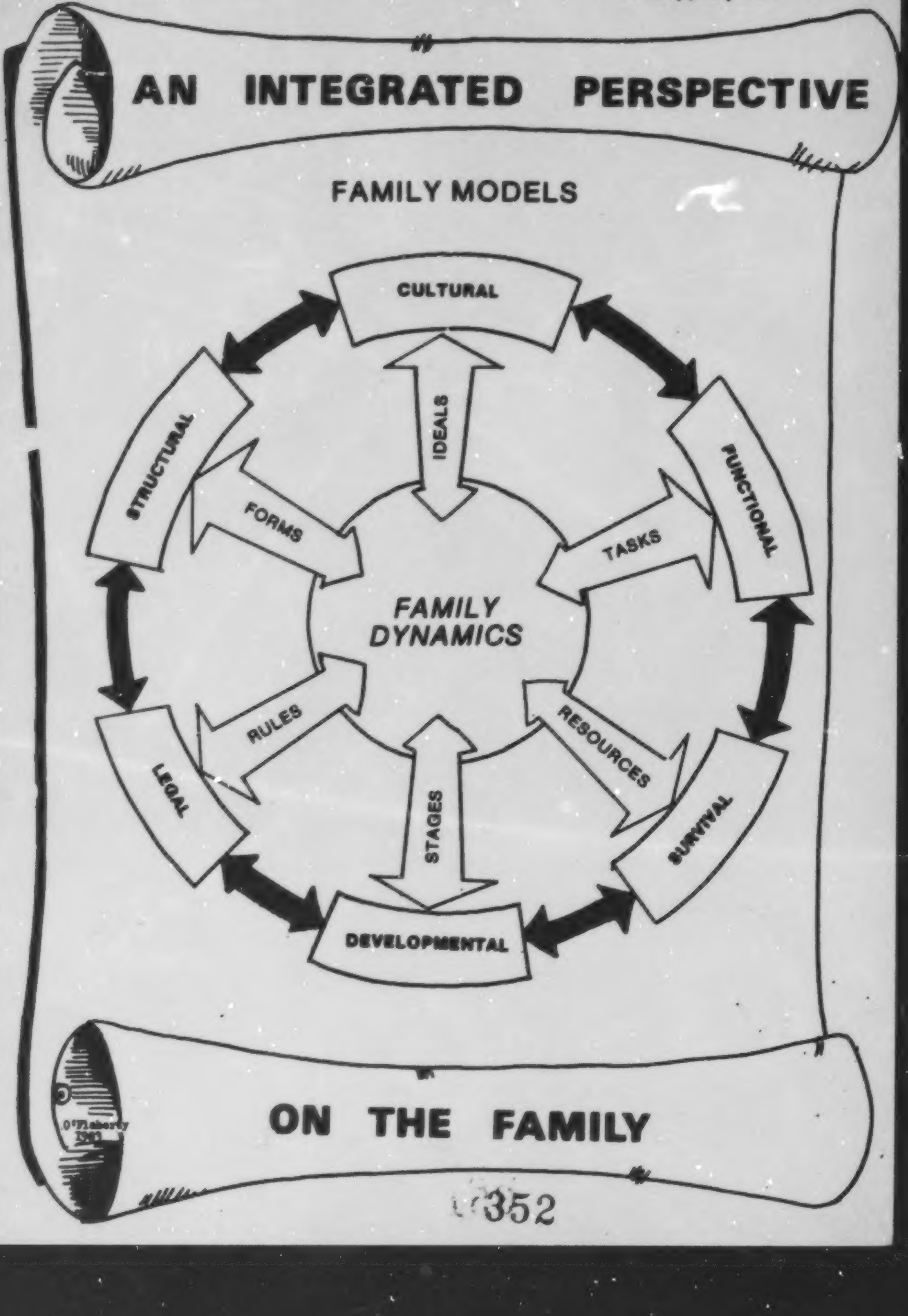
> 'The goal of family policy in Australia should be to provide a framework for a holistic response by government to family functioning in a complex industrial society.'
>
> (Christopher Brown 1980)

A careful consideration of the results of the content analysis of the family policy models - some of which we have examined - suggests that these models can be regrouped under one set of major concepts - each throwing a different shaft of light on the complexity of the family.

This regrouping results in an integrated perspective and a need to break out of some of the thinking patterns into which we have driffted. We need to climb mountains, pause and then take in the view.

If a move to an integrated perspective is to be made, then I suggest that the view from the mountain is a kaleidoscope of six interrelated models of the family. Each is linked to family dynamics - a term used to emphasise that families are ever changing. The integrated perspective is the pattern that connects family policy with the whole process of human development throughout the life cycle. These models and their link with family dynamics are:

Family Model	Link with Family Dynamics
CULTURAL	IDEALS
FUNCTIONAL	TASKS
SURVIVAL	RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENTAL	STAGES (life cycle development)
LEGAL	RULES
STRUCTURAL	FORMS


AN INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVE
FAMILY MODELS
CULTURAL
IDEALS
FUNCTIONAL
TASKS
SURVIVAL
RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENTAL
STAGES
LEGAL
RULES
STRUCTURAL
FORMS
FAMILY DYNAMICS
ON THE FAMILY
O'Flaherty

The diagram on the previous page represents the integrated perspective. The boxes on the outer circle contain the six models of the family which are accepted in the literature as complete. The arrows represent the contribution that each model makes to an understanding of the integrative role of the family in human development and in policy.

In summary the core concepts of each of the six new family policy models are:

CULTURAL

The family is a universal and fundamental expression of culture. It is interwoven with questions of life's meaning and the perception of reality. The reproduction of culture, sometimes called education, occurs initially within thefamily. This model is linked to family dynamics by ideals and value systems. Ideology creates real life belief systems which generate expectations of what families should be.

FUNCTIONAL

The social tasks required of a family make the family a real Task Force in the service of society. The variety of functions families perform, as reported in the literature is extensive and cannot be restricted to those filtered through the functional perspectives of rational models of policy analysis. The functions become the family's raison d'etre and those professions which bridge the link between thefamily and society rely on this model.

SURVIVAL

The family is the smallest group of individuals whose mutual need is to survive. They survive through work , production, consumption and creative activity. To survive, resources are needed and power is required. Power over resources, relationships, information and decision making.

DEVELOPMENTAL

The way people behave and feel in their family life is a community concern in promoting the well-being and happiness of individuals. This perspective views the family as a fundamental social group which both act upon individual family members and in turn is acted upon by the individual. Stages of growth and human development throughout the life cycle link this model with family dynamics.

LEGAL

The family is the relationship set out by the law in each State and Territory. The concept is predominantly used by lawers in courts when families are in conflict.

STRUCTURAL

Family living arrangements and patterns, because they are concrete, recurring and common experiences lend themselves to reduction as census type variables. The model describes how the family group is organised. It is linked to family dynamics by the concept, forms.

it would be recognised that each model represents Kuhn's notion of the 'incommensurability' of competing schools of though. Kuhn believed that proponents of competing paradigms practice their trades in different worlds and see different things when they look from the same point in the same direction. What they look at has not changed but;

> 'in some areas they see different things and they see them in different relations one to another'
> (1970:150)

The failure to link the patterns that connect family policy with family dynamics expains the crisis of perception and communication breakdowns as participants in the family policy debate retreated into their separate fact and value trenches. This generated more heat than light.

Such communication breakdowns can be resolved through what Khun calls 'translation processes'. Proponents of different paradigms first try to discover the others response to standard concepts, then seek to translate divergent views and their consequences into their own language and 'simultaneously' describe the world to which the theory applies in the proponents language.

Khun's translation process is necessary for arriving at an integrated perspective on the family because the family is multifacited and multidisciplinary. It includes perspectives from history, art, literature, sociology, anthropology, psychology, law, political science, religion and social ethics.

Tufte and Mayerhoff remind us that talking across disciplinary boundaries often has the effect of aerating fixed ideas, shaking up pre conceptions, advancing or deepening enquiries not because of new evidence but because of new inflections of taken for granted notions. These two writers say that when a historian calls a family 'a haven' a feminist calls it 'oppressive' and a child psychologist labels it 'schizrinogenic' all are forced,

> 'to a little more scrutiny of their original positions.' (1979:7)

Levant strikes a similar cord in a recent review of family research and points out that although at one time it may have been necessary for family researchers to focus sharply through the lens of one's own discipline it is now time to bridge and interrelate the contributions from different disciplines in order to work towards a unified and comprehensive theory that 'does justice to the complexity of the family'(1980:5)

Viewed through an integrated perspective, family policy acquires a special validity. This validity embraces concepts such as investment in human capital, life cycle development, the family as a task force to society, cultural and structural diversity; and to the concept of the family as 'the first, most intimate and perhaps most important community' which was used in the 1851 Census of England and Wales.

Any family policy which ignores the integrative role of the family is incomplete.

Dependency — A challenge for family policy

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Recently considerable interest in family policy has been sparked in various countries, through the documentation of family policies, coupled with attempts to establish a theoretical context for their development (Kamermann and Kahn, 1978; 1979; 1981). Interest has also revolved around the wider question of the role of the state and the impact and effectiveness of particular family policies. Within these endeavours, family policy has been seen as having a direct influence on family behaviour, positively or negatively (Barbaro, 1979). It has also been suggested that, because of political sensitivities, a comprehensive national family policy is a futile endeavour (Steiner, 1981).

In New Zealand, similar emphases have become apparent. The impact and effectiveness of policies, such as the Domestic Purposes Benefit (for soloparents), extended substitute care and taxation levels have been assessed individually or as part of wider studies by specially appointed government review committees, government departments and independent researchers (Domestic Purposes Benefit Review Committee, 1977; Easton, 1980; Wylie, 1980; Benfield and Kjellstrom, 1981; Task Force on Tax Reform, 1982; Social Programme Evaluation Unit, 1982). The documentation of family policies, the identification of family policy issues, and the analysis of their theoretical development have also been recently considered (Easton, 1980; Social Development Council, 1981; Koopman-Boyden and Scott, 1983, 1984). In 1981 New Zealand established a Social Programme Evaluation Unit in the Department of Social Welfare charged with evaluating the delivery of its own policies, most of which affect families; and the independent policy and planning body, the New Zealand Planning Council, is about to establish a Social Monitoring Group whose task will presumably include the monitoring of policies which affect families. However, this is not to suggest that there is an explicit family policy in New Zealand, nor is there any major on-going monitoring of family policies from a family perspective.

In New Zealand, as elsewhere, the interest in family policy has come from both those concerned with public policy and the role of the state, and those involved in family studies. Hill (1981: 255) has identified the emergence within family studies of a concern for the 'meso' level of behaviour considering the family within a wider context, such as the interface between the family and formal bureaucratic organisations, and family exchanges with the marketplace, workplace and health-care delivery system. Such studies have reinforced the necessity for developing macro theories of the family which, in this case, can incorporate an understanding of government policies for the family, the interests they serve, and the reasons for which such policies are developed. In a recent 'prescriptive analysis for the family field in the 1980s', Fox (1981) not only recognised the interest of family sociologists in analysing the theorising about family policy, but also made a strong plea for family sociologists to make efforts to ensure that their insights and findings were communicated to the policy makers.

The extension of family studies into the area of family policy may not, however, be without its problems. There is a danger that some of the time-consuming concerns and ommissions of family sociology are about to be replicated within family policy, given the overlap of the two enterprises. It is in an attempt to obviate the repetition of such mistakes, that three cautions are now established, with suggestions for their resolution. These cautions are with respect to the problem of definition, the focus of family sociology and family policy, and their separation from general theory.

The Problem of Definition

The problem of definition has long beleagued students of the family. From Murdock's classic structural-functional definition of the family population in the 1950s and 1960s[1], the increasing diversity of the family has become recognised and reflected in definitions which would allow gangs and religious orders to be regarded as families if they so wished; at the most colloquial, the family exists where the members call themselves a family. In a similarly liberal vein, New Zealand's Cabinet Committee on Family and Social Affairs defined the family as:

> "A group of people, including the very young and the elderly, who live in close association, which produces interdependence and a mutual obligation to support one another' (Christchurch Press, 5 May 1976).

Such definitions are to be applauded in overcoming the traditional emphases on nuclear families, but by including all households, run the danger of including all members of society without establishing any unique characteristics of family groupings.

A similar problem of definition besets family policy. Obviously family policy must be boundaried by the definition of the family, so that human groupings which are not considered families are not considered targets of family policy. Thus the needs of single people have usually not been considered within family policy (neither have gangs or religious orders).

The definition of family policy is, however, further compounded by a variety of policy perspectives. Kamerman and Kahn (2978) have set out three orientations of policy towards the family.

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[1] 'The family is a social group characterised by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults' (Murdock 1949

Family policy can be used as a *field* in which goals and objectives regarding the family are established and policies are developed to achieve these goals. Some possible goals which have been cited include those of larger (or smaller) families, a reduced financial burden associated with raising children (facilitated by programmes such as the family benefit and family rebates), and a more equal sharing by men and women of work inside and outside the home and of matrimonial property (facilitated by matrimonial property acts in New Zealand).

Family policy can also be used as an *instrument*, where the family serves as an important means for achieving policy objectives in other areas. For example, in the area of labour market policy the introduction of child care facilities (during the war) maternity allowances and other incentives and disincentives can be directly traced to the country's demand for female labour. Similarly pressures on public expenditures have led to the suggestion in New Zealand of giving greater assistance to families providing care for the elderly, the sick and the handicapped. Thus family policy can be used as a basis for gaining support for other latent (and perhaps unacceptable) objectives.

A third orientation of family policy is as a *perspective or criterion* for social policy choice. This approach uses family wellbeing as a criterion for decision-making, a form of benchmark or filter through which policies in a variety of areas can be assessed. For example, opposition to Saturday shopping in New Zealand in 1982 was based, in certain instances, on the belief that it would have detrimental effects on the family life of shopkeepers.

A further orientation might be the '*no policy policy*' perspective

(Land, 1978), where governments decide on non-intervention by the state in family matters. This was the case in New Zealand with the 1846 Ordinance and 1877 Destitute Persons Act, which made 'near relatives' of destitute persons liable for family support. Such legislation ensured that destitute persons did not become a responsibility of the state, and the state could continue a non-interventionist stance.

Thus in studying family policy, difficulties in definition arise from the family focus within policies (the boundaries of the family _per se_), and from the policy focus on the family (the boundaries of policies). The way in which the state deals with families will differ markedly according to each perspective, and may not always be in the best interests of the family.

Focus of Family Sociology and Family Policy

A further problem in family sociology has been to identify the central issue or focus. Is it the supposed changes in the family structure with industrialisation or industrial capitalism; or the relationship among family members measured in terms of status, power or marital satisfaction; or is it the inequalities manifest among families? Given the fact that almost all individuals live in families, some of these concerns can and have been more effectively dealt with outside family sociology. The theoretical focus of family sociology has been a problem. Such a concern is reflected in the Journal of Marriage and Family decade reviews which regularly implore family sociologists to undertake more theorising (Klein, _et al_., 1969; Broderick, 1971; Berardo, 1981).

A similar problem of focus is likely to beset family policy. State intervention in family life has occurred in New Zealand for over one hundred years (the Education Act 1877 made it compulsory for parents to send their children to school). Such intervention has been viewed, for example, as a means of ensuring a steady supply of well-educated and healthy units of labour to service the needs of capitalism or as a means of continuing patriarchal control over women and children through a variety of industrial laws and discriminatory practices. In New Zealand, as in most other Western countries, there is no explicit family policy with clearly established goals and as a result some of the state's involvement in family matters can be found to be contradictory among policies.

As with family sociology itself then, family policy needs to identify a clear focus, a focus which is concerned with the best interests of the family, and which is inappropriate to consider in any other context.

Separation from General Theory

The uneasy development of theory within family studies and its separation from general social theory and concepts about human group life has been a long standing concern. Family theorists have debated over the applicability of general theories of social action to an understanding of family dynamics, without realising that each theoretical construction has a useful but limited place depending on the level and type of family behaviour under consideration (Wiseman, 1981: 263). While the careful and systematic work of Burr (1973) and Burr, et al., (1979) in consolidating isolated research findings into conceptual frameworks and causal models will no doubt assist grounded theory development in the next few years, the separation of such work from other areas of sociological theory (for example, feminist theory), has severely limited theoretical development. It is to be hoped that this separation of family-specific theories from the wider social theories is not perpetuated by family sociologists who become interested in family policy.

In a similiar way by focusing on family policy as a separate area of state intervention, it is possible that theoretical isolation from the extensive literature on social policy and public policy will occur. In New Zealand efforts have been made to establish the area of family policy to ensure that policy-makers explicitly recognise the importance of the family. There are problems, however, in attempting to raise the policy-makers' awareness of the family as a focus of policy. The problem is a tactical one as to whether to establish separate and explicit policies for the target group, the family, or to develop a wider awareness of the importance of the group within the wider social or public policy.

Such a political problem also confronted feminists in wanting a greater policy focus on women. Ironically, it seems that in establishing itself as a separate policy area, family policy may overcome some of the difficulties which a separate women's policy has had in changing policies towards men and children. By placing emphasis on the inter-relationships among family members and the impact that state policies have on them, family policy can go beyond the individual interests of family members. Family policy provides a vehicle through which the social and economic relations among individuals can be improved and long-term societal change in human relationships can be affected. By serving such interests, however, there is still the danger that family policy will isolate the family from other concerns of society.

Suggestions for Resolution

The three identified problems are among those which have confronted family studies, and which could easily permeate family policy. All three problems centre on the question of focus: the definition or boundaries of family policy; the central issue of family policy; and areas of theory which can be drawn upon. The problems are inter-related, and call for a major reconsideration of the use of the concept family in this policy area, along with the establishment of a wider framework for the analysis of the role of the family, and of family policy, in society.

Focus of policy: dependency

The problem of the definition of family and of family policy, is essentially one of establishing the unit of analysis. Over time, the unit of analysis has altered within family sociology, and this has caused methodological and theoretical problems, especially in comparative studies. A similar problem of definition has also been identified within family policy. In an effort to overcome the difficulty, Koopman-Boyden and Scott (1984, forthcoming) suggest that family policy should pivot around the unit of dependency, and that the crucial element of family life is the interdependency of its members. The family is defined as, 'a grouping in which one or more adults are responsible, through a blood relationship or by law, for the economic support and nurture of one or more dependents'. Economic support usually involves the provision of financial security to the person receiving care, either in monetary terms or in the provision of food, shelter and clothing. Nurture involves the provision of social and emotional support as well as physical care.

In defining the family in terms of dependency, this can of course mean that some families may no longer be considered families, for example, so-called families where the members live together but pursue economically and socially separate lives more akin to a flatting or lodging establishment. Alternatively, other arrangements may be included, for example siblings who support each other economically and socially.

However, while it may be convenient to solve the problem of the definition of the family simply by defining the family in yet another way, the contention is that programmes which have come to be called 'family' policy (explicitly or implicitly) are best seen as policies maintaining or facilitating the independence of individuals or groups of individuals.

In reviewing government policies for the family over the last 100 years in New Zealand, most policies have been either to perpetuate the nuclear family (for example, the family wage, the family benefit), or have been policies aimed at individuals within the family (for example, industrial protection, laws, divorce acts). While the rationale for the latter may have been couched in family terms, in reality the politics have been individualistic with few of the implications for the family worked out. Yet it could be argued that both forms of policy have been concerned with the relationship of dependency.

The state has legislated for dependency to be shared in certain ways within the family through adoption bills, matrimonial property bills, and where necessary has increased its own responsibility for family support.

The unit of dependency can be seen as a focus of state concern, or unit of analysis. So far, however, policy makers have tended to confuse such policies by using 'the family' as the rationale and unit of analysis. A more explicit focus on the unit of dependency would, however, make the goal of policies clearer: to facilitate the economic and social independence of individuals or groups of individuals. State intervention would be prefixed on the loss of independence at all levels of economic and social status.

In considering Kamerman and Kahn's policy perspectives of field, instrument and criterion, dependency has, at least in New Zealand, been most often used as an instrument for achieving policy objectives in other areas. In a situation where there are insufficient jobs available for those seeking work, the government has encouraged the extension of traditional dependencies to support as many people outside the workforce as possible, along with those who are unemployed. The lack of provision of child-care facilities has been instrumental in keeping most mothers with young children out of the workforce, while those who are married and unemployed, or under 16 and unemployed, are expected to be supported by their spouse or parents. In these ways, traditional dependencies are instrumental to labour policy.

Alternatively, the use of independence as an objective of policy, would necessitate the explicit delineation of the strategies required by individuals, the community and the state, to facilitate individual or group independence. While such strategies may not differ significantly from those which would be considered under an explicit family policy, the orientation of many programmes would need to be altered. Tax rebates would continue to be used to offset the costs for those supporting dependents (for example, children and the handicapped), but tax abatement would be used wherever possible to allow people to move from social security support to market wage support, or to move from dependence on one's spouse or family to independence through equal opportunities.

Kamerman and Kahn's third policy perspective would see independence used as a criterion to evaluate policies. Thus before the introduction of new tax levels or other social and economic policies, their impact on the ability of individuals and groups of individuals to maintain their independence would be assessed. The 1982 New Zealand Budget changes in tax rates saw increases in the tax burden on part-time workers and the subsequent increased dependence of women on men, may have been avoided by using dependency as a criterion for policy making.

Issues of policy: dependency of whom? on whom? for what?...

Having established a unit of analysis for government policies, three central issues present themselves for documentation and analysis: in what circumstances should dependency be allowed? and who decides? On whom should such people be dependent? and to what level of independence should assistance be given?

Few would deny a dependent status to children, but the age and circumstances under which their dependency on parents or the state ceases is not clear. Assumptions regarding dependence and independence are made at various ages under different circumstances. Some of these seem anomalous; for example, in New Zealand a 16 year-old mother has access to economic support for her ex-nuptial child through the Domestic Purposes Benefit, yet neither women nor men can marry without parental consent until they reach 20 years; 17 year-olds who are unemployed are eligible for the state's Unemployment Benefit, while those who continue studying are expected to by supported by their parents.

A theoretical concern with dependency, its causes and interrelationship with other aspects of society has been meagre, but it has recently been taken up in some writings on unemployment and in the feminist literature. The arguments relate mainly to workforce exclusion and consequent dependency, a somewhat narrower concern, for not everyone outside the workforce is economically dependent on others. Alternatively many people in the workforce also depend on their family for support.

Several writers have set out the various forms of dependency, with theoretical explanations of causation. Titmuss (1968: 42-43) has identified 'natural' dependencies as those of childhood, extreme old age, and child-bearing, which in industrial societies, are caused by physical and psychological ill-health and incapacity, although in part they may be culturally determined dependencies. 'Man-made' dependencies include those of injury and disease along with unemployment, compulsory retirement and the delayed entry of youth into the labour market, these being wholly or predominantly determined by social and cultural factors. While making the observation that increasing dependency may be one of the outstanding social characteristics of the twentieth century, Titmuss acknowledges Durkheim's observation that as individuals become more specialised, they also become more socially dependent and interdependent.

The opinions on the circumstances in which dependence should be allowed are related to different perspectives as to the control individuals have over their environment. Dependency has generally been accepted in circumstances over which the individual has no control, and is therefore, not 'to blame' or 'at fault'. Thus state support has been given to the elderly, the widowed and the sick. Some would argue, however, that in so far as old age is a circumstance which can be anticipated by everyone, then the state should expect individuals to save for this eventuality. More latterly, state assistance has been given to the unemployed and solo parents - circumstances where an element of fault is often seen to exist and state intervention has therefore been seen by some to encourage such behaviour. While the state is currently prepared to provide economic support in these circumstances, controls exist which ensure that such support is not permanent.

Theoretical integration

The use of the unit of dependency as the focus of family policy, not only overcomes the restrictions of various definitions of the family, it also raises fundamental issues as to who should be allowed to be dependent, or remain dependent, in our society. Such questions, in not being restricted to the family, then lead us to a wider theoretical panorama.

A concern for dependency is in fact central to all public policy. While it manifests itself in family policy through the state's support for the privacy and independence of the family, other social and economic policies are based on similar concerns: for example since 1978 the New Zealand government has subsidised farmers through the supplementary minimum prices scheme in an effort to maintain farmers' incomes and independence; the state supports a vast number of caring organisations in an effort to continue their support of . the independence of others.

In maintaining the independence of such diverse groups, it can be asked, however, whether such independence is at the price of dependence on the state. Since the end of last century, New Zealand has been externally dependent on overseas markets for its primary produce. The economy is now also internally dependent on supplementary minimum prices to underwrite primary industry as well as a social security system to support the "producers of labour". In both cases, independence has been exchanged for dependence on the state. Such a move has invoked concerns as to how many dependents (farmers and old age beneficaries alike) the New Zealand economy can support, given the large internal and external debt, and whether New Zealand (and other welfare states) are currently more dependent societies than in previous decades. A theoretical concern for dependency and the state's facilitation of independence might well integrate macro and micro public policies and enable the development of a rationale for the more equitable distribution of expenditure.

A concern for dependency also focuses interest on the historical development of public policies. It can be shown that, at least in New Zealand, government policies tended to establish the infrastructure (roads, banking, development loans, etc) of capitalist enterprise long before any assistance was given to the poor and the indigent. Heidenheimer, et al., (1975) suggest that with respect to income maintenance policies, state provision occurred in a particular order in a number of countries. While that order seems also to apply to New a study of the specific events and ideologies underlying the concern for dependents could lead to some predictability of future policy. It might also reinforce the need to integrate the findings of family studies with family policy formulation.

By using dependency as a focus, attempts can be made not only to explain dependence within the family as a result of power relationships within it, but also those inequalities outside the family which perpetuate the dependency of the family as a whole. Feminist analysis has drawn attention to the dependencies created and maintained within the family through patriarchy, while Marxist analysis has considered the ways in which the capitalist economy itself has depended upon the family to produce and maintain the labour force. A similar dependence of the capitalist economy can also be seen on women working within voluntary organisations and community care.

It is suggested that a movement away from the family as a focus for policy could well allow the responsibility for dependents to be seen as not just that of the family but as one for *all* society. By working within a dependency framework rather than only that of family, all of these examples can be explored together theoretically, as well as considering how dependencies are shared among the family, the community and the state.

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The impact of housing costs on families

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I am here now to report briefly on the study of Housing Costs and their Impact on Families; a research study being undertaken in Melbourne. Analysis of survey results is in a very preliminary form so I have been asked to outline the study aims, issues examined and preliminary findings instead of John Bottomley, who has saved his air fare.

The study is being undertaken by the Centre for Urban Research and Action. It has 3 aims:

- To examine the social impacts of economic changes in the housing market, particularly increasing interest rates, and the likely effects of these changes on family formation and material well-being.
- To examine the relationship between life cycle, wealth and housing.
- To examine the role of support networks in securing access to housing for different socio-economic groups.

A number of theoretical issues relating to family behaviour and the housing market are being addressed by this study. Some of them have been raised already by other speakers at this conference, particularly Peter McDonald's questions on the timing of first births, and Gordon Carmichael's discussion of the old link between marriage and changing to the status of homeowner.

It was confidently expected that it would be found that interest rate increases have resulted in homebuyers having to increase the proportion of their income spent on housing, and that tenants who wished to buy a home would also have to make additional financial efforts.

The first aim of the paper - to examine the social impacts of rising housing costs - led to a number of questions in the sample survey to identify social impacts. The issues addressed include: To what extent have families adapted by delaying marriage, delaying the birth of the first child, the wife remaining at work for a longer period after marriage or returning more quickly to the workforce after the birth of a child; how many husbands have taken a second job to help meet repayments or save a deposit? This broad group of adaptations relate to efforts to increase or maintain income in order to meet the higher housing costs.

A further set of issues explored are those which will have an impact on the housing market: to what extent do tenants give up their desire for homeownership, delay their purchase (effectively reducing demand for purchased dwellings and increasing the demand for rental accommodation); to what extent do tenants give up their desire for homeownership, delay their purchase (effectively reducing demand for purchased dwellings and increasing the demand for rental accommodation); to what extent do the rising housing costs result in a change in the nature of demand, from houses to flats, for example, or from expensive to more basic dwellings. Demand side housing market economists argue, for example, that, if housing costs rise, people will be forced to scale down their expectations about size, fittings and quality, and that the era of family rooms and en-suite bathrooms will pass as people bring their housing expenditures back into line with costs and incomes.

A third set of theoretical issues arising from the first aim is to examine the expenditure adjustments that families make in order to continue to meet their housing repayments or targets for saving their deposit. Changes in expenditure on health insurance, food, holidays, recreation etc, and the distribution of these cuts in expenditure between family members, were sought as they may have important consequences for family functioning and individual well-being.

The study also aims to examine the importance of the broader family - especially rich fathers and grandparents - in easing the path to homeownership of some groups in our society.

THE SAMPLE

Characteristics of the sample

1. Sample size — A target of 300 households was set and 284 interviews were completed.

2. Sample location — Households were randomly selected in four LGA's - Knox, Keilor, Caulfield and St.Kilda. Knox and Keilor are relatively young suburbs on Melbourne's outer eastern and western fringes while Caulfield and St.Kilda are both old inner suburbs.

3. Socio-Demographic Background

   (i) Of the 294 people interviewed, 111 (37.8%) were male and 183 (62.2%) were female.

   (ii) 80% of respondents (79.9%) were married and a further 10% were living in a defacto relationship. 3.7% were either separated or divorced.

   (iii) Over 60% of respondents were born in Australia with another 11% born int he english-speaking countries of United States, Canada, United Kingdom and New

Zealand. Most of the remaining respondents were born in Europe.

(iv) Family type consisted mostly of couple only (25.9%) and couple with dependent children (55.4%). 5% of respondents were single parents with dependent children.

(v) Most of the respondents (62.2%) were buying their own home and 5.1% owned their home outright, 1/3 were tenants.

SOME PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FROM THE SURVEY

i. Adjustments made or envisaged by families as a result of increased housing costs

40% of respondents stated that they had decreased their rate or level of savings because of increased housing costs. 37.5% had said that they had reduced their level of personal spending and 21.4% had decreased their holiday expenditure.

These responses may well indicate the difficulties that renters face in accumulating sufficient capital to enter the home ownership market. They may also provide support for McDonald & Carmichael's observations about the impact of high costs of home ownership on marriage and fertility rates.

ii. Housing costs for home buyers

61.5% were paying up to 20% of income in housing costs.

- 18.5% paying over 25%

- 6% were paying in excess of 40%

- 7% of homebuyers had experiences difficulty in meeting rising payment costs.

iii. Tenants

- 1/3 indicated they would like to purchase their own house or flat believed that they would never be able to afford to buy.

- 1/5 were saving to buy - 45% of them were experiencing difficulties in doing so.

- 30% had been saving for 5 years or more

- 51% said that rising housing costs - caused changes in household/budget expenditure - 45% of those starting a family or planning further children.

- 33% indicated they would experience difficulties if household expenditure increased by $5.00 per week.

CONCLUSION

As the briefness of this report indicates, analysis of the material collected in this study of the Impact of Housing Costs is by no means complete. However, I hope that the outline presented today has raised some of the important questions and am sure that CURA would welcome your comments and suggestions.

Living and learning — Rapid community growth and its consequences in Newcastle, NSW

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ABSTRACT

Under the auspices of The Institute of Family Studies, a small scale longitudinal research project was carried out on the impact of a large scale Housing Commission project influx on a well established, upper-middle class, lake-side residential area in Newcastle.

The major focus was on the family - existing and newcomers - with family types being categorised into single parent, nuclear, and elderly types. There was a six month interim between initial and follow-up interviews with the families.

A wide variety of strategies for life and residence were encountered, encompassing a large variation in individual responses, and aspirations for children and adults.

Modes of adaptation, institutional mechanisms, the problems posed by rapid expansion, and methodological issues, are key issues of the study, against the backdrop of Housing Commission development.

INTRODUCTION

This study focussed on the impact of a large and rapid Housing Commission development in the centre of a well-established lake-side suburb in the Newcastle region. Data were derived by structured interview, with a follow-up six months later. Psychological and sociological variables were probed in an attempt to isolate factors contributing to community cohesion, with particular emphasis on family type (single parent, joint and elderly) and length of residence (new arrivals and existing residents).

Central dependent variables analysed included socio-economic status, self concept, involvement in social networks, education level, the perception of stigma associated with Housing Commission residence and modes of adaptation utilized by the different family types. Factors contributing to, and inhibiting community development were of major interest in the context of chronological landmarks of significance and environmental problems. Issues of theoretical importance, community, security, self concept and self esteem, and the Housing Commission are outlined in the following section.

Theoretical Considerations

(a) Community

A community has been aptly described as 'patterned interactions within a domain of individuals seeking to achieve security and physical safety, to derive support in times of stress, and to gain selfhood and significance throughout the life cycle' (Klein, 1968, p. 11). Here the emphasis is on the establishment of social networks by individuals in search of security and positive self regard.

The dynamics under scrutiny related to the establishment of a new community in the midst of an existing one, the modes of adaptation utilized by families of both groups, the development of social networks, and considerations of security and self esteem. Community homogeneity is of considerable interest here as it gives rise to homogeneous socialization experiences. Schnore (1973) has suggested that these experiences can have three outcomes - alienation from the community, anomie or normlessness, and future aspirations.

> If anything will turn a number of individuals into a group, it is living together over an extended period of time. They must learn to cooperate in the use of space, to develop a common subculture to help them deal with the problems they face in their particular location, and to share such facilities as utilities, recreational opportunities, and the mass media. Simply to avoid constant conflict, those who come into frequent contact with each other must work out patterns of interaction and exchange that enable them to get along satisfactorily. (Zito, 1975, p. 176)

Moving into a new residence on a semi-permanent basis entails considerable stress for any family group, especially those living close to the poverty line. Areas of concern for the parents of family groups could be assumed to differ according to individual circumstances. For example, single-parent families would have a vested interest in the provision of child-minding facilities or schools. The aged would be concerned with distance to shops or medical services. Couples would be affected by the distance to work and the provision of public transport. Barriers to social integration in the total community would be psychological isolation, which could have consequential repercussions on self-esteem. Such aspects of stress, areas of concern and barriers to social integration were major concerns in the study.

(b) Security

It has long been recognized that one of the most basic of human needs is for security. Maslow's (1943) oft-cited needs hierarchy puts only the physiological survival needs of hunger and thirst before security. Until the need for security has been satisfied there is little likelihood of the higher order needs like "belongingness and love", "esteem" and "self-actualization" being met. Similarly Kelvin (1970) has emphasized the centrality of security in social behavior. For him, security stems largely from order and predictability in the social environment and this is based largely on value consensus.

Security has many facets in today's world. Financial stability looms large in the current climate of high unemployment. Physical safety and security is of increasing concern to many in our society. There are constant messages from the media pointing to the increasing incidence of violence of various sorts - assaults, muggings, bag-snatching, robberies. We are constantly warned that we are approaching the American way of life where street violence is frequently seen as much an aspect of day to day living as the traffic and weather. The causes of such trends are tangled and complex, but must include unemployment, media emphasis on materialism, drug addiction, youthful boredom and permissiveness in the family and school. There does seem to be an increasing level of violence in our society and evidence that highlights it (e.g. Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, 1978).

Despite some controversy on the issue of violence, the important implication lies in the psychological sphere, in what has been described as Thomas' Theorem: 'If a thing is believed to be real, it is real in its consequences'. If people believe that violence, a threat to their security, is on the increase, it will affect their behavior. One example is that the aged, infirm, and perhaps women will be less likely to utilize the streets of our community, particularly at night. Such curtailment of human activity in the urban environment is of major import to all concerned with family life, housing, town planning, law enforcement, quality of life, and social welfare in the community.

One further aspect of the security issue stems from the work of the ethologists on territoriality (Lorenz, 1966; Tinbergen, 1953) and the issue of personal space, a more psychological consideration (Sommer, R., 1959; Ardrey, 1970).

Territoriality refers to the need for the species to maintain and, if necessary, defend its own area for survival and security. The concept of personal space, a portable territory, is a contraction of the territory referred to above, each individual requiring and maintaining a sphere of intimacy, his/her personal space, that is not to be violated by strangers. These two concepts gain relevance in considerations of individual housing in the city; a need on the part of the urban dweller for seclusion and privacy with his/her intimates. Every individual has a need for his/her own patch, inviolate and private, as a haven for relaxation and perhaps refuge from the outside world. Cohen (1969) has pointed to some of the more insiduous threats to modern day man's privacy and hence security. One's view of self may be regarded as a psychological aspect of security.

(c) Self Concept and Self Esteem

One's view of self and the evaluative aspect of this (self concept and self esteem) play a major role in how the individual perceives, interprets and behaves with respect to the environment (Wylie, 1961). Stemming from the long-established and well-founded theories and research of Cooley (1902) and G.H. Mead (1934), the origins of self concept and self esteem are social in nature. The 'looking glass self' suggests that we see ourselves through the eyes of others. This important facet of personality is something that depends on social feedback, and is learned and nurtured through competence and approval (positive reinforcement of behaviour) in social interaction. It has its roots in early family life (Coopersmith, 1967) and those emerging with positive self esteem have multiple advantages in life - they are more likely to attempt new tasks, are more open to new experience, have better social relationships and a higher level of success in educational and occupational endeavours (Coopersmith, 1967; Wylie, 1961; Naylor, 1972).

Dimensions relating to the self are very obviously of a psychological nature. Both Klein (1968) and Kelvin (1971) emphasize the psychological and security (predictability) aspects of community and individual well-being. With all possible environmental resources and supports available, the individual must still make a move towards their utilization. This is the essence of self esteem.

Key elements in positive self esteem involve self confidence, social competence and the individual's recognition of personal worth (Coopersmith, 1967). This may be assessed by rather complex, and sometimes dubious, psychological questionnaires which seemed inappropriate in the present study. It was decided to rely on interviewer ratings of aspects of self as presented, and revealed by reports of past endeavours and future aspirations. For example, respondents who were disenchanted with their experiences in life in the recent past, and could see little improvement in the future, would be unlikely to initiate adaptive measures when faced with a new community environment.

The self concept rating was based on the interviewer rating on the following six variables:

i. self confidence (inner resources);
ii. self presentation (conversation, body language);
iii. future optimism;
iv. problem coping capacity (children, life, adaptability);
v. social involvement (narrow/broadly integrated concerns);
vi. Social competence.

Inter-rater agreement on self-concept ratings was found to be high in joint interviews when trialling the interview schedule and testing for reliability.

(d) Housing Commission

For most people their home represents the safety and security centre in the city. Current projections see it also as the work and relaxation centre of the future. It is a longstanding and universal dream of Australians to own their own home, a status that the majority have attained (Edgar, 1980, p. 72). For those with insufficient means the Housing Commission is often the only avenue by which this goal may be achieved.

Housing Commission allocations are made on the basis of need, primarily financial; 'Need is assessed on such factors as the level of income, the number of dependent children involved, physical handicap and the length of time waiting for assistance' (Housing Commission brochure - Home Purchase Assistance). This is in contrast with the existing community of Bolton Point/Fennell Bay which adjoins the Quigley Estate. This existing community could be described as middle class, although this description has to be qualified by the estimate that more than two-thirds of the residents are engaged in unskilled occupations (Resident Committee's Report, 1980). With the expected influx of a large number of new residents with contrasting socioeconomic backgrounds, it was inevitable that considerable strain would be placed on the existing community resources. Increased demand would be made on educational institutions, transport, retail and leisure facilities. It is generally acknowledged that there is some stigma attached to residence in a Housing Commission area and a concomitant concern on the part of existing residents with respect to property values. Prior to settlement of the Quigley Estate a Residents' Committee voiced considerable apprehension about the possibility of the emergence of social problems because of the segregated nature of the development. They argued in a publication (Submission to NSW Minister for Housing, March, 1980) and at a public meeting called for the purpose, for integrated housing having a fifty per cent balance between public and private housing. Nevertheless, this advice was initially held in abeyance. Only in December, 1982, were the first blocks offered for private development within the estate.

The housing development is itself a major advance on what has been the social stereotype of Housing Commission areas. Traditionally, this image has been one of identical homes, regimentally spaced, with few facilities available in a tree-less isolation. These houses are new, attractively designed, with sufficient diversity to cater for aesthetics. Residents of these homes enjoy views of both bush and lake, if not from the windows of their home, than by a walk of only a few minutes. They are situated in what is commonly regarded as prime real estate. This factor alone might be expected to engender some degree of resentment on the part of existing residents.

The New South Wales Housing Commission Annual Report (1979) indicated that less than half of the applications received for housing came from couples, with or without children. One third of the applications came from single parent families with the remainder coming from aged pensioners. Just on five hundred applications were received from single-parent families in the Newcastle area, of whom approximately 60% were in the 20-40 years age range. One half of these subsisted on less than one hundred dollars per week.

These characteristics provided a profile of families which could be expected to move into a new Housing Commission development occurring at Quigley Estate, Bolton Point, in the Municipality of Lake Macquarie. This profile is of relatively young couples, single-parent families, and the aged, with minimal incomes.

Quigley Estate, the Housing Commission development at Bolton Point, is situated on the hilly foreshores of north-western Lake Macquarie, about twenty two kilometres from central Newcastle. The first Housing Commission residents arrived at the beginning of 1982, with progressive settlement occurring as cottages were completed. By December, 1982, one hundred and fifty two cottages were occupied by approximately seven hundred new residents. Eventually the estate will include six hundred cottages in 1987.

This Estate (Precincts 2 and 3) is part of a much larger development envisaged to ultimately involve three thousand dwellings in fourteen precincts which will have a population of some fourteen thousand people by 1992.

A major influx of new residents has been seen as a form of 'immigration' by Gibbs and Wiggins (1981, p. 4) who describe several implications. Their analysis of the patterns of socio-economic change in the coal-mining town of Singleton, NSW, showed several results. These included differences in residential choice, age structure, employment prospects, and the qualifications of the 'new' and 'old' residents. The authors concluded that the assimilation of the new population into the community social structure had potential conflict and would have to be considered problematic: especially in terms of the real or perceived differences in background or income. It was of particular interest in the current study, with its short term longitudinal emphases to examine the community homogeneity-heterogeneity dimension and factors which contributed to it. The means of doing this involved item probes in the area of perceived stigma attached to Housing Commission residence.

Hypotheses

On the basis of the foregoing theoretical issues the following hypotheses were framed:

1. Existing residents will manifest higher levels of self esteem and feelings of security initially.

2. Existing families who have the greatest amount of contact with the newcomers will assess the new development in the most favorable light.

3. Each of the three groups - the elderly, joint parent and single parent families - will develop distinctive modes of adaptation to the new situation.

METHODOLOGY

Of the 47 interviews which were conducted in the homes of the residents 42 were subsequently able to be used as sources of data. The five omitted were either incomplete or disqualified as the respondent left the community.

The independent variables in the study were family type (elderly, joint parent and single parent families) and the dichomtomous 'established residents' and 'newcomers' in the community. Since modes of adaptation to the new situation were of major interest, a longitudinal approach was adopted, utilising two data gathering occasions spaced by an interval of six months' duration. The study was both small scale and heuristic in nature, so the qualitative nature of the data was deemed to be of major importance. Rather than the use of objective questionnaires, the appropriate technique was the structured interview.

An interview schedule was constructed tapping the key variables as listed above. Additionally, demographic and social data (family type and size; length of residence; ages of children; socioeconomic status, etc.) were gathered. The interview schedule was trialled by both authors working together, and independently, with acquaintances and in the field. Following discussion and analysis of practical and scoring difficulties, the schedule was refined.

The next step was to contact informants. Initially this was attempted by a letter drop explaining the project, with an invitation to participate. This approach proved to be unsuccessful, so a bipartite strategy was adopted by a door-knock and by contacts established within the community. The latter included introductions through the Community Development Officer, from existing respondents to friends and neighbours, from school administrators, and from a publicity campaign in the Community Bulletin (again, with help from the Community Development Officer).

No claim for random selection of subjects can be made. Several factors rendered randomization difficult, if not impossible. Certain categories of families were simply not available within the Housing Commission development to meet the study schedule requirements. It was intended to get five families in each of the categories dictated by the study design (as shown in Table 1). In brackets is shown the actual number participating and the attrition rate between the two interviews.

TABLE 1 in here

Major problems were experienced with respect to all frequencies related to Existing, Single Parent families (which simply did not exist or were unwilling to participate) and Elderly, New Residents (who had not settled in the Commission Development in sufficient numbers at the time of initiation of the study.)

The size of the sample was extremely constrained by the policies of the Housing Commission which determined the classification of the incoming residents, and by the nature of the already-existing community. For example, the lakeside community was an ideal location for reasonably affluent retirement couples who had built new homes, and for some pensioner couples who had made permanent homes on weekender sites purchased many years previously. Thus there was no problem in filling the sample with existing, elderly families. However, only one equivalent was available in the new residents, as other types of families (with a number of young children) were receiving precedence. Another factor which severely limited the size of the sample was the delay in the actual building program. A larger number of existing families were readily available, but the study was already over-schedule as new residents were awaited. There was also some suspicion of the purposes of the study from both sectors of the changing community. Thus the written contact, seeking participation was ultimately abandoned in favour of a personal approach, as described above. The interview sheets were analysed in terms of the descriptive data they provided, with specific emphasis being placed upon the following aspects: The sub-group represented (existing or new resident; single, joint or elderly family); socio-economic status; self-esteem; the happiness estimate; the safety estimate; degree of social integration; contact with others; stigma; education; and assimilation.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: Existing residents will manifest higher levels of self-esteem and feelings of security initially.

This hypothesis was tested both qualitatively and quantitatively. The means of the self-esteem scores for existing and new residents were calculated for the two occasions, and the same was done for security. These data are summarised in Table 2.

TABLE 2 in here

As can be seen, the mean self-esteem scores for existing residents (10.1) is considerably higher than that for new residents (6.8); a test for significance of the difference between the two groups was found to reach the five percent level (t=2.5, df=23), supporting the first aspect of this hypothesis. With respect to the security or environmental safety variable the hypothesis is rejected although the difference is quite small. New residents perceived the environment to be somewhat safer than the established residents. There is very little change within either group of either self-esteem or safety scores.

It is now necessary to turn to the qualitative analysis of the security variable, including considerations of security in one's personal life, in terms of both social and financial aspects. At the broadest level, established residents have a considerably higher socio-economic status. Many occupied large and luxurious homes in waterfront positions. In general, financial threats and worries were not an issue of major concern, except for such issues as inflation, increasing rates, reducing house values and an occasionally-voiced comment about the cost of living.

Some degree of insecurity entered the responses of existing residents in the context of their children's education and future. Concern was expressed about school overcrowding due to the rapid influx of new residents. There was some reported intention of sending children to private schools and further concern about their employment prospects in future years. (It should be noted that the last point was made equally forcefully by the new residents).

Social networks in the existing residents were well-established, the average length of residence of the sample being 12.4 years. Most respondents had a network of well-established friends both inside and outside the community. Within the community, many were members of the Bolton Point Tennis Club which controlled two courts. Others were involved with the local Advisory Committee which recommended to the local municipal council local works requiring attention and priorities for expenditure of funds in the community.

Hypothesis 2: Existing families who have the greatest amoung of contact with the newcomers will assess the new development in the most favourable light.

To test this hypothesis, the first and second interviews with existing families were analysed, with a focus on the responses to items dealing with the degree of social integration, contact with others and perception of stigma. These data, with the second interview response codings shown in brackets, are provided below.

TABLE 3 in here

Seven of the respondents (01, 04, 06, 07, 09, 22, 23) initially showed higher social integration (having ratings between 7 and 10). Three had lower ratings of 3 or 4. On the second interview eight (04, 06, 09, 15, 17, 22, 23, 25) had higher social integration and two (01, 20) lower. No systematic link can be established between social integration, contact with others and perception of stigma, thus the hypothesis must be rejected. An interesting aspect of the results, however, is the manner in which the perception of stigma tended to increase rather than decrease in the second interview. Residents commented that the increased contact with newcomers in the community over the intervening period had made the respondents conscious of differences in standards of behaviour, language, dress, and use of leisure time and community facilities. Problems of noise and swearing were mentioned by three respondents who lived close to the Housing Commission dwellings. One respondent mentioned vandalism (the destruction of real estate agents' signs and the lighting of fires along the waterfront) and irresponsible car driving. Other respondents mentioned the drop in land and housing values, and the general effect of a larger community population adversely affecting the life-style previously enjoyed.

Hypothesis 3: Each of the three groups: the elderly, joint parent and single parent families will develop distinctive methods of adaptation to the new situation.

The responses of each of the three family types were analysed for both interviews. Variables considered were degree of social integration, amount of contact, educational involvement, satisfaction and range of contact. The results for each of the three groups are provided below.

Single Parent Families

The single parents sampled showed a tendency for self-reliance as a means of adapting. With young children who had not yet started to attend school (or the pre-school play group held in the community hall), single parents faced a considerable restraint on their range of contact with others. They simply did not have the opportunity to go to meetings, visit friends or have a day out. This constraint was exacerbated by the lack of public transport and the distance (and terrain) between their homes and either shops or transport. However, institutions such as the neighbourhood cottage, the pre-school, and the public school did provide means of meeting others. The role of the last two depended, naturally, on the ages of the children.

Unfortunately, the pre-school play group was not as effective as it may have been in promoting social integration. Meeting on two days a week, the groups began as a social mix of new and old residents and children. By the time of the second interview, though, the groups had become homogeneous, with existing residents attending on one day and new residents on the other.

The single parent families were the least adapted of the three groups, largely because the constraints of their situation forced them to spend less time in the community and more time at home looking after their children. Trips such as a visit to the nearby town to pay the Housing Commission rent were seen as onerous rather than an enjoyable excursion. For example, one respondent described 'happiness' as being '...left alone to do what I want.' Another said 'I have learnt to depend on myself.'

If there was a characteristic adaptation, it was meeting with a close neighbour for a cup of coffee at one house or the other, while the children played together. The frustrations of such parents was vividly demonstrated during an interview conducted with two single parents in the home of one. The discussion was punctuated by shouts at two children of one of the women. Her shouts to the children became louder and more frequent and climaxed when one youngster fell off a dinky onto the cement path outside the front door. As the child began to cry, the mother rose to her feet shouting 'Serve you right! Hope it hurt! Bloody kids...' The neighbour intervened and ushered the child into another room where an older child assisted.

Joint Families

The joint families which participated in the survey showed more varied methods of adaptation which were related to their greater mobility and flexibility. The adaptations were of two types: those associated with their children's activities, and those associated with the parent's work and leisure interests. Of the first type, interactions occurred around the school (canteen work by women; the school book-week activities; school fete, etc.) sporting activities (football, tennis) church activities (a Sunday School commencing in the neighbourhood cottage) and youth club activities (such as Boy Scouts).

A babysitting co-operative was also established by a group of parents.

Families reported a range of leisure activities which brought them into contact with others in the community. Some boys played football and cricket on the oval after school. Water activities (such as fishing) were popular, as was bicycle riding. Joint parents were more likely to individually or together attend licensed clubs or hotels.

New residents praised the welcoming ceremony held at the neighbourhood cottage as an ideal means of integration. At this ceremony new residents were formally given the keys of their new homes, and met community workers, the local school principal, Housing Commission officials, and local tradespeople (such as the baker and milkman). One new resident who moved into a home in the existing community also spoke in very positive terms about a welcoming party given by residents of the street.

The Elderly

A more sedentary life style was encountered in this group, as was to be expected. There was generally a greater preoccupation with health issues and a concern that the quietness of the community would be disrupted. Also noted was a concern for personal safety (with security devices in the home being quite apparent). Involvement tended to be with family networks.

Keeping in mind the small sample (n=5) three stances could be discerned. There were those who kept to themselves predominantly, being primarily family oriented and having activities centred on fishing, gardening, reading and sewing.

A second form of adaptation involved elements of the first, but included a more active involvement in community activities such as Church, Service Clubs, craft classes, exercise groups and golf or bowls. The third form is labelled 'retreatism'. One family sold out and moved to a different locality because of the constant noise and threat posed by activities in the adjacent park and the telephone booth at the front of their property. Health factors also played a part in this retreatist strategy, as the husband had a heart problem and as caretaker of the community hall in the adjacent park frequently had personal contact with troublemakers. As would be anticipated the elderly generally wanted a peaceful and happy retirement, and did not wish to see their previous tranquility destroyed. All of the existing residents interviewed perceived the existence of stigma attached to Housing Commission residents, and felt that land prices would be reduced in value. None ventured out at night for walks.

The hypothesis is thus supported: the elderly, joint parent and single parent families developed distinctive methods of adapting to the new situation. These methods of adaptation can be related to the differences in the constitution of the families, and the extension or contraction of the social roles possible.

DISCUSSION

Higher self esteem was manifested by the existing residents initially. At the end of the six month period, the Housing Commission residents displayed a general increase in self esteem, but still at a level lower than that of the existing residents. This result tends to support the first hypothesis.

It is to be expected that the new arrivals would manifest greater insecurity due to lack of familiarity initially, this being reduced over time. The data supported this view.

Similarly, over the interview period, the greatest increases of self esteem and security feeling amongst new residents were demonstrated by those who became actively involved in the community. However, no systematic link could be found between social integration, contact with others and perception of stigma. Stigma tended to be a self-fulfilling prophecy in some instances.

It was possible, however, to identify distinctive methods of adaptation which characterised elderly, joint and single parent families. These adaptations were associated with the family constraints in terms of mobility and freedom from domestic responsibility.

Chronology of Significant Events

A useful way of tracking community development was the calendar of 'significant events'. Such events affected different community members in different ways. For example, the closing of the only shop in the immediate neighbourhood was but a minor inconvenience for those with cars, but posed a major problem for single parents or the elderly without transport. Such individuals had to plan shopping expeditions thoroughly (sometimes with the aid of parents who lived in another suburb) on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Inadequacy of public transport was frequently cited by such respondents.

Episodes of vandalism highlighted community morale amongst the more actively involved Housing Commission residents. A typical response from that group was: 'It wasn't none of our kids. It was outsiders that done that.'

The utilization of critical incident data has a second methodological importance, apart from its revelation of community structure and dynamics and that is the respondents' awareness and involvement in the issue as an indicator reflecting orientation to both the community and 'others'. In this sense it is positively associated with self esteem and social integration.

The Issue of Stigma

Initially the new residents said that there was little stigma attached to living in a Housing Commission home. At the end of the six month period 60% of the new residents said there was a high degree of stigma attached to Housing Commission residence. Existing residents perceived considerable stigma on both occasions.

Qualitative data gained in the second interview indicated that this was a reciprocal process. Observations of the 'other' group, such as 'rowdy'; 'snobbish' or 'stuck-up', were descriptions given. Inter-group interaction tended to support these impressions.

On the part of some existing residents the full range of responses and resentment was encountered: 'They are lowering the tone of the neighbourhood and school'; 'House values have fallen through the floor. On the part of the newcomers there was an oft-reported reluctance to associate with existing residents: 'They think they're better than us'; and 'Why would they want to talk to us?'

Existing residents expressed resentment at the Commission residents who attained good accommodation with 'million dollar views' for practically no financial outlay, while the existing residents had made major investments.

It should be emphasized, however, that the realization of the existence of stigma does not necessarily translate itself into overt behaviour. The stigma does exist in the minds of respondents and appears to have become more pronounced in the six month period. This in the long term can only result in the existence of two separate and non-interacting groups living in adjacent communities within the same nominal community.

Adaptation Mechanisms

The major factor facilitating adaptation of the newly-arrived residents appeared to be the Community Development Officer, and the Neighbourhood Cottage (which was newly established in a cottage loaned by the Housing Commission for the purpose).

At the stage of the first interviews in this study, the 'Welcoming Committee' was in operation. It involved a group of local tradespeople, School Principal(s), representatives of the Housing Commission and local government. The ceremony appeared to fulfil three important functions:

1. It provided vital 'survival' information about transport, rent payment mechanisms and advice, shopping, food deliveries, school facilities, etc.

2. It gave an opportunity for the new resident to meet their immediate neighbours with a realisation that others shared their situation; and,

3. It provided an opportunity to identify the Community Cottage as a source of advice, support and friendliness through the Community Development Officer and her volunteer aides. The combination of person and facilities emerged as of considerable significance.

It was observed, with some misgivings, that towards the end of the study the 'Key Ceremony' appeared to be losing importance as the rate of influx of the new residents increased.

Unfortunately, it appears that the usefulness of professionals such as the Community Development Officer is restricted as the community expands and places increased administrative demands upon the CDO. The literature, and our study, emphasises the critical role of such individuals, with enthusiasm and availability as major variables.

CONCLUSIONS

It would be valuable to extend this longitudinal study, for many important aspects of the research are just beginning to emerge. As an heuristic and exploratory exercise it provided valuable insights into the dynamics of family adaptation to a new community. As to be expected, these dynamics do not lie on a simple continuum upon which the three family types under focus can be located. Further, there was no steady change rate which could be graphically plotted in the range of variables under study for both new and existing residents of the community. Some attitudes and characteristics (such as stigma) revealed in the first round of interviews tended to be self-fulfilling, in other instances positive changes can be discerned in both individual and social characteristics.

Different types of families, especially the aged or single-parents, demonstrated a more restricted range of adapting activities. This feature draws attention to the importance of other catalysts such as professional community workers, facilities such as the neighbourhood cottage, and activities such as play groups. In particular, single parents appeared to need aid in order to adapt. Minimally, such aid would include a means of relieving the stress of sustained child supervision.

Innovations such as the key ceremony appeared to be of importance in both a literal and figurative sense. Symbolically, it marked a new start and a conscious effort to induct the new resident into an existing community. The visibility of the neighbourhood cottage and the activities of the community worker supported the melding process.

The question of the extent to which spatial relationships are significant in the integration of new families in a community will soon be tested as the settlement of the Quigley Estate enters a new phase. Currently, blocks for private sale and home construction are being sold. These blocks are adjacent and between Housing Commission dwellings. The situation will provide an opportunity to test the well-argued case of the Residents Committee for integrated housing. Based on the findings of the present study, the view has at least face validity. The insularity provided to the Housing Commission development by a well-defined border of tarred and kerbed streets was unmistakeable. The boundary was clear. It formed an obstacle to be overcome by a conscious effort from both new and old residents.

If, as indicated in this study, existing residents have higher levels of self-esteem and security, then it can only be advantageous to have them living as close as possible to the new Housing Commission residents. Objective evidence of such emotional, social and personal assistance would be relevant for Housing Commission policy, and potentially of great aid to future Housing Commission residents moving into new communities.

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TABLE 1

Study design indicating family type, and residence, on test and retest. (Obtained frequencies in brackets)

Family Type	February, 1982			October, 1982		
	Existing	New Residents	Total	Existing	New Residents	Total
Elderly	5 (5)	5 (1)	6	5 (5)	5 (1)	6
Joint	5 (5)	5 (6)	11	5 (4)	5 (4)	8
Single	5 (1)	5 (6)	7	5 (0)	5 (4)	4
Total	15 (11)	15 (13)	24	15 (9)	15 (9)	18

TABLE 2

Mean Self-Esteem and Security Scores for Existing and New Residents for the two interviews. (T1,T2)

EXISTING RESIDENTS		NEW RESIDENTS	
T1 (N=11)	T2 (N=10)	T1(N=14)	T2 (N=10)
10.8 (0.8)	10.3 (0.7)	6.8 (1.0)	6.8 (1.0)

(Mean scores for security are shown in brackets after the mean scores for self-esteem)

TABLE 3

First and Second Interview Data on amount of contact
and perceptions of stigma by existing residents.

FAMILY I.D.	SOCIAL INTEGRATION		OTHERS		STIGMA	
01	7	(3)	1	(0)	2	(3)
04	8	(8)	2	(0)	0	(3)
06	10	(6)	2	(3)	0	(1)
09	8	(8)	2	(1)	2	(3)
15	7	(7)	1	(0)	3	(3)
17	3	(6)	1	(3)	3	(3)
20	4	(0)	1	(0)	1	(1)
22	8	(5)	3	(1)	3	(1)
23	9	(6)	3	(1)	3	(3)
25	4	(8)	2	(2)	1	(2)